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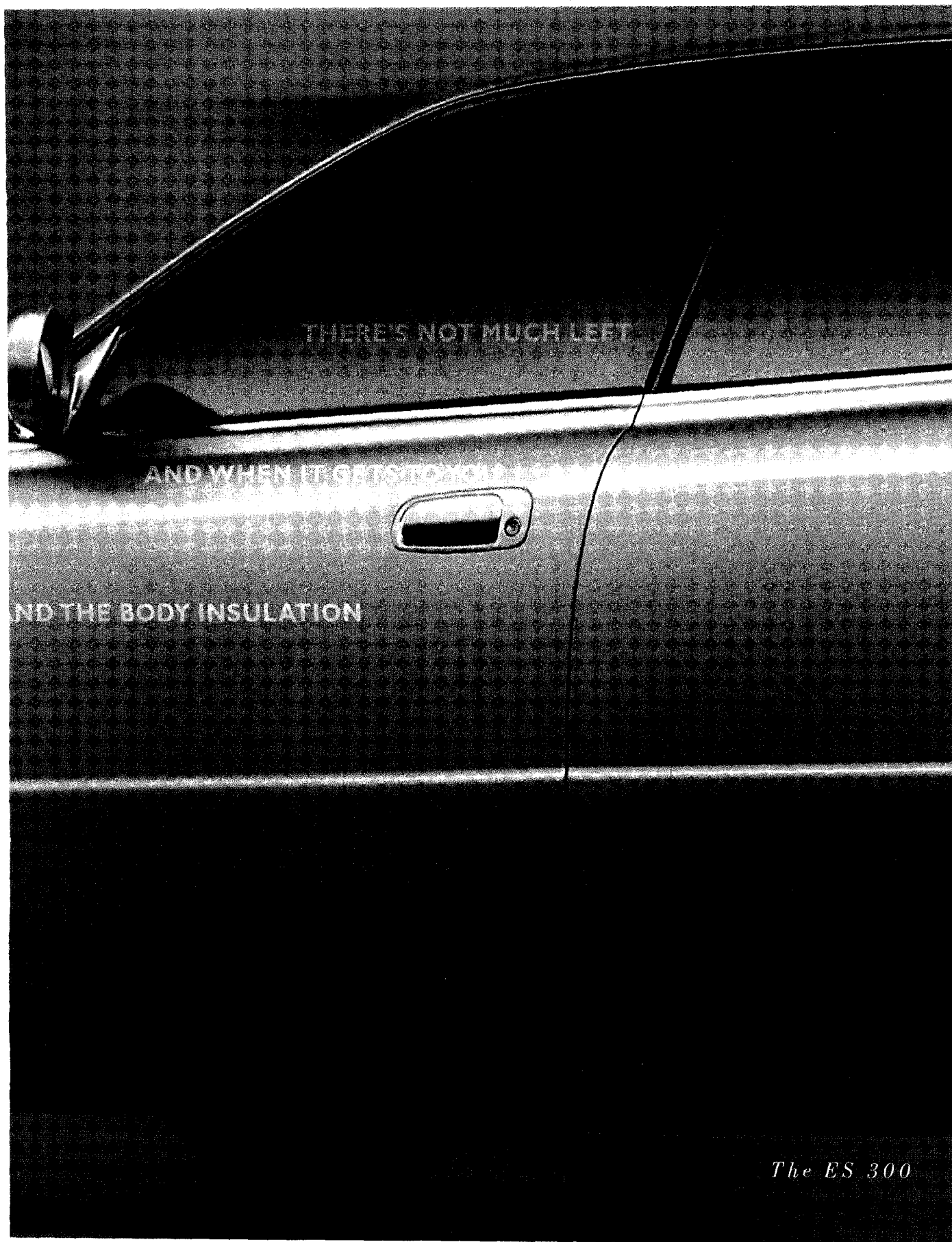
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FOR THOSE WHO KNOW.



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VEIL OF TEARS

The candidates are having a bawl.

THERE are tears at the heart of things": Ron Brown's burial at Arlington National Cemetery illustrates the durability of Virgil's words. But the old-fashioned sight of wet-eyed leaders at a funeral provokes as well an awareness of how often we now see elected or aspiring officials weep in places other than graveyards. In Virgil's day, it was the orator who moved the audience to tears. Now, in the theatricalized world of modern American politics, it is increasingly the orator who is overcome. Candidates complain about the invasion of their private lives, but remain apparently unfazed by their own public display of once private emotions.

The passing of Edmund Muskie, on March 26th, was a reminder of the fast-paced revolution in political watermongering. In 1972, Muskie's candidacy for the Democratic Presidential nomination dissolved in the wintry New Hampshire cold. Defending his wife against accusations of cussing and other "unladylike" comportment, Muskie faltered and, for a moment, fell silent. He later claimed that the rivulets on his cheeks were melted snowflakes, not tears. Whatever the truth of the matter, even the appearance of crying was enough to sink him. If Mrs. Muskie had been "unladylike," Mr. Muskie had revealed himself as possibly "unmanly." Get the hook!

But crying isn't just an airy-fairy Democratic habit. The same week that Edmund Muskie died, Bob Dole celebrated his own, more successful, quest for a Presidential nomination with a fresh burst of public tears. Visiting his home town of Russell, Kansas, the Senator choked up as he recalled the help he had received long ago from his fellow-townpeople while he was recuperating from wartime wounds. Dole has been turning on the tears with increasing frequency in recent months, in an earnest and yet deeply political strategy of "humanization." When he cries, he offers the voters his own "conservatism of the heart," his special brand of frugal dolorousness.

Dole must have known that he was going to weep in front of the adoring throng in Russell, if only because, in the same place two decades earlier, he had effectively legitimized political tears. In 1976, just four years after Muskie's fateful rivulets (but a four years in which the country had crossed the abyss of Watergate), Dole was selected as Gerald Ford's running mate. The next day, the pair flew to Russell for a rally. "I can recall the time when I needed help," Dole told his Kansas audience. He added, "The people of Russell helped—" and then he "stopped speaking," his biographer Richard Ben Cramer records. "He looked down. His left hand had come up to his forehead,

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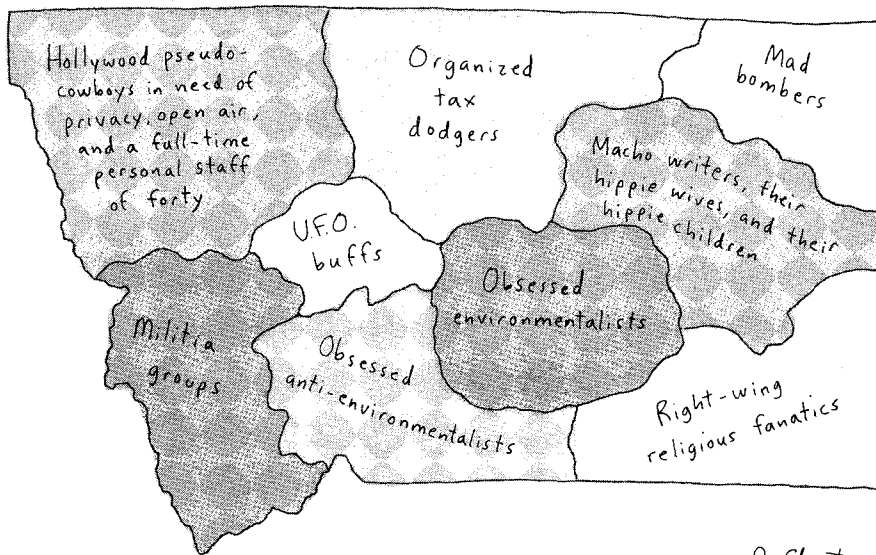
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MONTANA, THE GORGEOUS MOSAIC



hiding his eyes. He was crying. The silence was awful." After an eerie pause, President Ford got up and started clapping. Thousands of Kansans joined in, thunderously. Far from being dismissed as weak or sissified, the way Muskie had been, Bob Dole went on to conduct a busy campaign as Ford's hatchet man.

During the years between 1976 and 1996, Dole has mostly kept his sentiments under tight control—a crazy aunt locked in his emotional attic. In the meantime, Bill Clinton has brought a new level to the art of tears in the political arena: his I-feel-your-pain tears of empathy have become as familiar as Carter's toothy grin or Bush's prepster malapropisms. This year, Dole, the tear pioneer, has tried hard not to let the snifle gap get too wide: he's publicly crying—and smiling—more than ever before. (In a Republican field of nine, Dole, the winner, was the only on-camera weeper.) Now that he is his party's presumptive nominee, we can be fairly sure that whoever is President of the United States next year will have wept his way to the top.

How did the campaign trail become a trail of tears? Why do Clinton's and Dole's fits of weeping "work," whereas Muskie's didn't? Part of the answer lies in the immense cultural changes that have taken place over the last generation, slowly redefining ideas of masculinity and femininity even at the most elite levels of the political system. But further insight into

this modern, and uniquely American, Presidential phenomenon comes from an ancient source: the dispassionate tear-analyses of the Christian tradition.

The essayist and apostate E. M. Cioran has a scorching phrase in his book "Tears and Saints": he writes there of the "voluptuousness of suffering." He is referring to the emotions of the saints, but the words are apposite to the reactions of a modern audience, because watching Dole or Clinton cry is voluptuously gratifying to the spectators. And the Church can explain the voluptuousness. Its philosophers, as meticulous in their delicate craft as Swiss watchmakers, distinguish between the alienating tears of human weakness—the kind that Muskie did or did not shed—and the enhancing, other-directed category of "holy tears," which the religious connoisseurs of crying maintain that the saints weep. In contemporary sentimentalism, as in everything else, there is a left wing and a right wing. One kind of "holy tear" defined by Church analysts is "the tear of compassion." This is Clinton's tear. Humbly, he weeps not for himself but for the suffering voter. A second kind of "holy tear" is "the tear of love." This is Dole's you-feel-my-pain tear. Dole mists up when he thinks not about his wounds as such but about the people of the little provincial town who, when the wounds left him helpless, helped him. Clinton weeps when he listens, Dole when he speaks.

There are other lachrymose distinctions to be made between the two candidates. Both Clinton and Dole have problems with language: Clinton is too good with it, Dole not good enough. In effect, if not in intention, both men use tears as a signifier of sincerity. Tears, after all, are supposed to be involuntary and uncommodifiable. (They can't be supplied to a candidate, like talking points on index cards.) They serve to overcome the obstacle of words. When Clinton's eyes fill up as he listens to tales of distress, his tears signal that he has ascended to a higher, egoless level of concern, leaving his suspicious linguistic fluency far behind him. "Your suffering," the shining gaze seems to say, "is so great as to be beyond my power to say anything about it." Dole, on the other hand, uses tears as a surrogate for articulateness. They are, to paraphrase Clausewitz, a continuation of campaigning by other means. What he cannot express verbally with his rapid-fire "My view is . . ." Senate-speak he can suggest through his mute but eloquent tears. In both cases, the highly attractive underlying message to voters becomes "Words fail me."

E. M. Cioran's queasy fascination with the saints is set off by an attitude that may be useful to the American electorate: suspicion. Cioran's blasphemous claim is that the saints' tears are really expressions of a gigantic, Nietzschean aggression toward the world. Saints are "politicians," he writes. And in saintliness he detects a "delirium of self-aggrandizement hidden beneath its meekness, its will to power masked by goodness." Perhaps, then, as politicians appear softer-hearted, the voters' duty is not to embrace them but, rather, to get warier and harder-hearted. For, just as blood, blue-green when seen through the skin, gushes red from a cut, so all "holy tears" shed on a public stage turn political and instrumental.

Spiritual tradition identifies a third kind of "holy tear." This is the Jimmy Swaggart-style "penitential tear," which neither of the current Presidential candidates uses at all. Not to worry: there will be plenty of time for penitence later, in private. But mark down this election season as the period when carefully timed public weeping has become as acceptable a part of the modern political armory as the computerized mailing list and the attack ad. Oh, yes, there are always "tears at the heart of things." Now, lamentably, there are also things at the heart of tears. —NICHOLAS JENKINS



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New York Times Book Review

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RED FLAG

Tony Horwitz's "A Death for Dixie" (A Reporter at Large, March 18th), about the murder in Guthrie, Kentucky, of Michael Westerman, a young white man who displayed a Confederate battle flag, by a young black man, hit home. Like Westerman, I sport a Confederate flag on my truck; I also have a license plate that reads "REBEL-1." My intentions aren't racist, and my motives aren't obscure: I'm a Civil War buff, and I feel that I'm expressing my interest in a major turning point in American history. The Confederate battle flag is not just a banner that some malcontents hide behind to express their twisted viewpoints. Groups like the Sons of Confederate Veterans help promote the fact that the flag represents history, not racism.

EDWARD J. SUTLIFFE
Quincy, Mass.

symbol of "valor and sacrifice," as some Southerners maintain, the memory of slavery and the subtle and not so subtle forms of racism still present in our society clearly overshadow those intentions. There must be other ways in which Southerners can show their regional pride.

CAROLE DEVINE
Brookline, Mass.

"A Death for Dixie" makes it clear that it is hard to say which is worse: the kind of racism and hatred that hides itself neatly behind closed doors or the kind that is disguised only by white sheets when it is paraded downtown in the middle of the afternoon.

JON MOORE
Santa Fe, N.M.

ONE MANN'S LIFE

Alex Ross's review (Books, March 11th) of Anthony Heilbut's biography of Thomas Mann interested me in the connections and separations between Mann's sexual life and his literary works. But something seems amiss. Heilbut's depiction of Mann's homosexuality cannot reconcile Mann's interest in boys with his fifty-year marriage, while Ross apparently assumes Mann's heterosexuality on the basis of Mann's having sired six children. Clearly there is still a sexuality that dare not speak its name: bisexuality. It seems we allow people greater freedom and variation in their artistic endeavors than in their own lives.

BRIAN O'DONNELL
New York City

Letters should be as brief as possible, and sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to "In the Mail," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. They may be edited for length and clarity.

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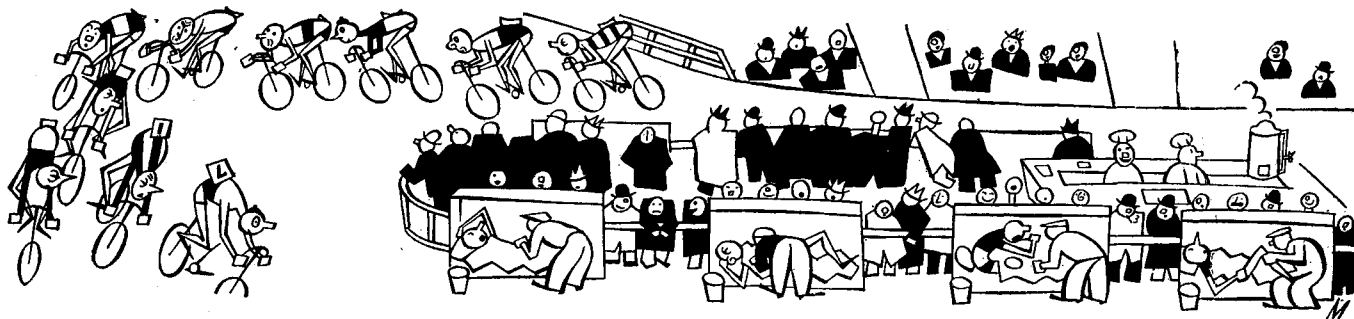
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THE ALEXANDER PLAYS . . . SUZANNE IN STAGES—The Signature Theatre Company wraps up its Adrienne Kennedy season with a trilogy of plays. Opens April 19 at 8. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

ANTIGONE IN NEW YORK—The Polish-born playwright Janusz Glowacki's latest—a tragic-comedy about the friendship of a homeless Latina and two Eastern European émigrés. In previews through April 22. Opens April 23 at 8. (Vineyard, 108 E. 15th St. 353-3874.)

BIG—A new musical, based on the 1988 movie. Directed by Mike Ockrent, with choreography by Susan Stroman. In previews. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

BURIED CHILD—Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre brings Sam Shepard's 1978 pitch-black play to Broadway, under the direction of Gary Sinise. In previews. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099.)

CURTAINS—Stephen Bill's 1987 dark comedy about aging, directed by Scott Elliott. Opens April 17 at 8. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

A DELICATE BALANCE—Lincoln Center Theatre presents Edward Albee's unbalanced-family drama, first staged in 1966. Directed by Gerald Gutierrez. Two previews on April 20. Opens April 21 at 6:45. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

FIORILLO!—The Village Light Opera Group's production of the 1959 musical. Opens April 20 at 8 and continues through April 28. (Fashion Institute of Technology, 227 W. 27th St. 279-4200.)

FRIENDS—Kobo Abe's absurdist comedy, translated from the Japanese by Donald Keene, in a Pan Asian Repertory Theatre staging. In previews through April 18. Opens April 19 at 8. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 245-2660.)

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM—The 1962 musical, starring Nathan Lane as the Roman slave Pseudolus. Directed by Jerry Zaks. Two previews on April 17. Opens April 18 at 6:45. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

JACK: A NIGHT ON THE TOWN WITH JOHN BARRYMORE—Nicol Williamson stars in a one-man play, which he co-wrote with its director, Leslie Megahey. Previews begin April 20. (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

PAPA—Len Cariou plays Ernest Hemingway in a drama by John deGroot, set in Havana in 1959. In previews. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

THE SLOW DRAG—Vernel Bagneris, Ann Crumb, and Peggy Shaw in a new play by Carson Kreitzer, about a jazz musician on the last night of his life. Opens April 17 at 8. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 840-3074.)

TOVAH: OUT OF HER MIND—A new one-woman show from Tovah Feldshuh. In previews through the April 21 matinee. Opens that evening at 7. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

VENUS—Suzan-Lori Parks's new drama, based on true events, tells the story of an African woman who was exhibited as "the Hottentot Venus" by an English circus in the early nineteenth century. Directed by Richard Foreman. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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OPENED RECENTLY

ANDREA MARTIN and MARGA GOMEZ—Two solo shows. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400. Closes April 21.)

THE APPLE DOESN'T FALL—A new mother-daughter comedy-drama by Trish Vradenburg. Leonard Nimoy is the director. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

BELOW THE BELT—Richard Dresser's brilliant dark comedy is set in "an industrial compound in a distant land," but it hits close to home in its dead-on absurdist take on modern life. Judd Hirsch, Robert Sean Leonard, and Jude Ciccolella could be slightly sharper, but the production, under the direction of Gloria Muzio, is nevertheless very satisfying. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

THE BOAR'S CARCASS—A new thriller by Stephanie Dickinson. (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 935-5820. Closes May 5.)

BOMBER JACKETS—Rob Santana's new play, which centers on a gang member's encounter with a transvestite in Bay Ridge, is an intense, well-played, and entirely believable explo-

ration of the visceral nature of stereotypes and the wrench it takes to get beyond them. Directed by Alba Oms. Performances are in English Wednesdays through Fridays and in Spanish on Saturdays and Sundays. (Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 354-1293. Closes April 21.)

BRING IN 'DA NOISE, BRING IN 'DA FUNK—Director George C. Wolfe and dancer-choreographer Savion Glover's heroically energetic African-American musical. (Reviewed in our issue of 12/4/95.) (Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

CALL ME SARAH BERNHARDT—The Ridiculous Theatrical Company's latest has reopened at the Chelsea Playhouse. (519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

CHECKMATES—Ruby Dee and Arthur French lead the cast in a revival of Ron Milner's 1988 play. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 279-4200. Closes May 12.)

COWGIRLS—"You ain't country," Jo Carlson (the talented Rhonda Coulet) accuses the chamber-music trio she has mistakenly booked into her Rexford, Kansas, tavern, but by the end of this appealing, if somewhat predictable, musical comedy, the threesome has been transformed into fringe-wearin', honky-tonkin' cowgirls. Mary Murfitt, the show's composer and lyricist, is hilarious as an uptight violinist learning how to shake it. Betsy Howie, who wrote the book, is also in the cast. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

DO SOMETHING WITH YOURSELF: THE LIFE OF CHARLOTTE BRONTË—Playwright Linda Manning portrays the author of "Jane Eyre." (Miranda, 259 W. 30th St. 532-6719.)

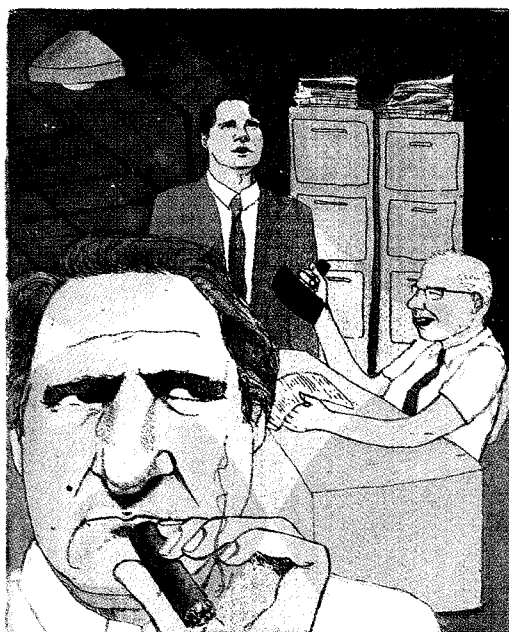
DON JUAN COMES BACK FROM THE WAR—The Classic Stage Company presents the German playwright Odón von Horváth's version of the rake's tale. (136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

A FAIR COUNTRY—In Jon Robin Baitz's neatly packaged but emotionally hollow new play, a well-meaning American diplomat (Laurence Luckinbill) in South Africa and The Hague sets in motion an unseen but horrifying course of events when he takes steps to keep his family from disintegrating. (3/11/96) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

FORBIDDEN HOLLYWOOD—Gerard Alessandrini's hit-and-miss movie-biz sendup. (Triad, 158 W. 72nd St. 799-4599.)

I Do! I Do!—Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt's 1964 musical comedy about marriage. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

INHERIT THE WIND—Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee's 1955 play, based on the Scopes "monkey trial" of 1925, is undeniably melodramatic, but it's also a thoughtful, powerful explication of religious and political issues that we still haven't figured out. With George C. Scott and Charles Durning as the duelling attorneys, the air crackles even when they're not saying a word. At the climax, the two men voice their convictions so convincingly that when the victory goes to one of them it's almost startling—the scene has been a triumph for both actors. John Tilling, directing a fifty-two-member cast, creates a suitably creepy backdrop of unthinking orthodoxy; An-



Judd Hirsch, Robert Sean Leonard, and Jude Ciccolella, in "Below the Belt."



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thony Heald, who is terrific as a sardonic reporter, and Reathel Bean, who plays the not quite competent mayor, leaven the drama with humor. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6280. Closes May 5.)

THE KING AND I—A revival of the 1950 Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, starring Lou Diamond Phillips. Christopher Renshaw directs. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100.)

LIFE IS A DREAM—Calderón's 1635-36 drama asks whether a person can overcome the fate that the stars have decreed. Though it's overburdened by speeches, the Pearl Theatre Company's well-designed production, under the direction of Rob Bundy, solves the problem by emphasizing humor: the speeches here are almost as much fun as the battles, yet Calderón's philosophical point is never lost. (80 St. Marks Pl. 598-9802. Closes May 5.)

LA MAMA—April 18-20 at 7:30 and April 21 at 3 and 7:30: "A Kingdom for My Horse," the

MRS. KLEIN—Two London psychoanalysts—the famous Melanie Klein (Uta Hagen) and her less renowned daughter, Melitta (Laila Robins)—face off in a murderous argument and proceed to browbeat each other with theory in Nicholas Wright's smart though schematic drama. Robins is excellent; Hagen is brilliant. (11/20/95) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

MOLLY SWEENEY—Brian Friel's 1994 play owes much to an Oliver Sacks case study, but Friel didn't reimagine the material, and the play, which he directed, comes across as a staged reading of an essay. (1/29/96) (Laura Pels, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

THE NIGHT OF THE IGUANA—Robert Falls's production does justice to Tennessee Williams's 1961 play, in which spiritual longings play out in the hothouse setting of coastal Mexico. In the central role of the feverish fallen minister, William Petersen, in sweaty agony, gives you

and David Adkins, as the analyst Ludwig Binswanger. Written by Willy Holtzman. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052. Closes April 21.)

SEVEN GUITARS—August Wilson's exciting new play, which flashes back to the final days of a Pittsburgh blues singer (Keith David), sends us stirring news of black life in the late forties. The seven guitars of the title are the seven memorable characters whose high times and dashed dreams Wilson turns into beautiful, complex music—a funky, wailing, irresistible Chicago blues. Lloyd Richards is the director. (4/15/96) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

STATE FAIR—This lively, colorful stage version of Rodgers and Hammerstein's 1945 movie musical is a pleasure, despite some weak performances in key roles. As an Iowa farm couple, John Davidson is unctuously over the top and Kathryn Crosby is, sadly, nowhere near the top; Andrea McArdle, as their daughter (who experiences true love at the Iowa State Fair), is an alloy of cardboard and show-biz steel. The young men, Scott Wise (playing the dancing-reporter you've ever seen) and Ben Wright (in the role of a young man who learns a thing or two about love at the hands of a been-around-the-block chanteuse), and the vibrant Donna McKechnie (who plays her) are the heart and soul of the show, and they're enough to hook you. Co-directed by James Hammerstein (son of) and Randy Skinner, who also did the choreography. And, sakes alive, the show has a woman conductor, Kay Cameron. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

SUNSET SALOME—During her incarceration at the Whispering Sands Hospital for the Criminally Insane, Norma Desmond—played as an anorexic drag queen by Michael McQuary—finally gets to stage "Salome." No new territory gets staked out here, but composer Max Kinberg's operatic score is suitably Ridiculous, and the tiny stage teems with multitalented performers. Librettist Peter Wing Healey, as a gender-bent Herodias, is a scream; dancers Felicia Norton, as Salome, and John Heginbotham, as John the Baptist, are a dream. Mainly, though, the enterprise serves as a showcase for Willa Kim's spectacular Orientalist costumes. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202. Closes April 28.)

VICTOR/VICTORIA—Julie Andrews, Tony Roberts, and Michael Nouri star in a theatrical version of the 1982 movie. The score (by Henry Mancini) is generic, and the book (by Blake Edwards, who also directed) is patchwork. (11/20/95) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

VIRGINS AND OTHER MYTHS—Colin Martin's one-man show—a sort of "This Gay Boy's Life"—is an explicit though graceful dive into the depths of his own psyche. (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 239-6200.)

ZOMBIE FROM—A new nineteen-fifties rock-and-roll musical. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)



Louis Leonardo, Marc Geller, Alex Furth, and Marcos Muniz, in "Bomber Jackets."

Italian performance artist Dario d'Ambrosi's re-creation of "Richard III."... April 18-20 at 10: Three one-acts directed by Randy Gener—Christopher Durang's "The Hardy Boys and the Mystery of Where Babies Come From," Craig Lucas's "Credo," and Perry Layton Ojeda's "The Trick." (74A E. 4th St. 475-7710.)

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR—Starbucks coffee, Princess Di, and the Internet are among the casualties in Jackie Mason's latest two-hour monologue. Stuffed into a tight black suit, the sixty-one-year-old comic prowls the stage like a rabid penguin, parcelling out tough love with equal-opportunity glee. His range may be limited, but his timing is perfect: when he responds to Jesse Jackson's call for more black accountants by citing the dearth of Jewish coal miners ("Ever see a yarmulke with a searchlight?"), the house rocks with laughter. The set, a mock Lower East Side street, is clever and unobtrusive; the Boys Choir of Harlem shows up briefly, via videotape, to sing "Hava Nagila." (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

MASTER CLASS—Zoe Caldwell portrays Maria Callas with steely, diva-esque conviction in Terrence McNally's latest play, but the role is merely the sum of all the clichés that have been in circulation for years. Leonard Foglia directed. (11/27/95) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM—The Royal Shakespeare Company has brought the comedy to town for a brief engagement. Directed by Adrian Noble. (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

the feeling that there is something holy in him wrestling to get out. Cherry Jones, as "a New England spinster who is pushing forty," is his opposite: her character has achieved a hard-won peace with herself, and, though Jones seems too pink-cheeked and Girl Scoutish for the role, she has a quiet gravity that compels attention. Marsha Mason seems right at home as the earthy voluptuary who owns the rustic hotel where the play is set. Also with Lawrence McCauley. (1/8/96) (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

NIXON'S NIXON—On the eve of his resignation, the thirty-seventh President and his secretary of state uncork the brandy decanter and spill a few secrets about power as they have known it. Gerry Bamman as Nixon and Steve Mellor as Kissinger are always engaging and sometimes masterful. Written by Russell Lees. Directed by Jim Simpson. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 315-2244.)

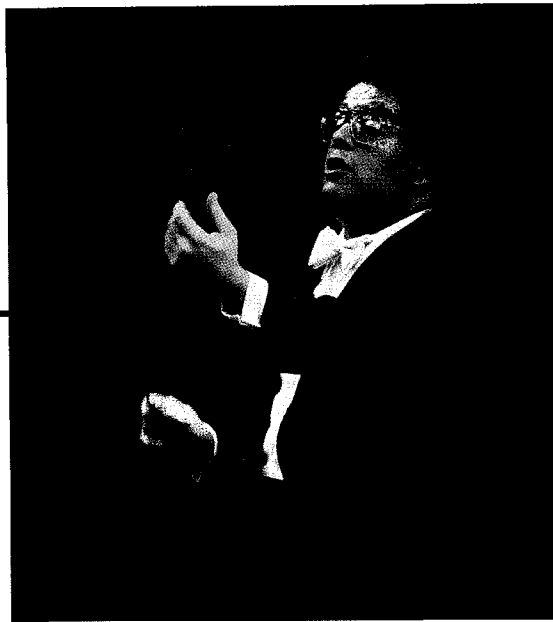
NO EXIT—The Independent Theatre Company presents Sartre's 1945 existentialist drama. (House of Candles Theatre, 99 Stanton St. 353-3088.)

RENT—The rock opera has moved uptown to Broadway's Nederlander Theatre. (2/19/96) (208 W. 41st St. 921-8000.)

SABINA—An ambitious, intelligent new drama based on Aldo Carotenuto's 1982 book, "A Secret Symmetry," which revealed Sabina Spielrein's previously all but unknown contributions to Carl Jung's work. It re-creates the analytic process beautifully, thanks to a sleek production, elegant direction by Melia Bensussen, and some fine performances, especially by Marin Hinkle, in the title role,

LONG RUNS

AFTER-PLAY: Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200. ... **BEAUTY AND THE BEAST:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. ... **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. ... **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. ... **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. ... **THE FOOD CHAIN:** Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100. ... **GRANDMA SYLVIA'S FUNERAL:** SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 691-1555. ... **GREASE!** Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200. ... **HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITHOUT REALLY TRYING:** Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100. ... **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. ... **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. ... **MOON OVER BUFFALO:** Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200. ... **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. ... **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. ... **PICASSO AT THE LAPIN AGILE:** Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200. ... **ROB BECKER'S DEFENDING THE CAVEMAN:** Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St.



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DANCE

BEBE MILLER COMPANY—The dancer and choreographer celebrates her company's tenth anniversary with two programs that include two premières: "Blessed," set to gospel music (by a group of Australians) and "Yard Dance," with a score that makes use of tree frogs. Miller, who projects the feeling of the earth under her feet even when she's airborne, explains the latter title: "It just came to me—I was thinking about being outside and dancing in the dirt." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. April 16-19 at 8, April 20 at 2 and 8, and April 21 at 2 and 7:30.)

"FLOOD"—Sondra Loring, the effortlessly watchable dancer, is turning into a choreographer who attracts other watchable dancers. In "Two Strong Girls Dancing," she and the gifted and topsy-turvy Lisa Race rise and tumble with a weekend-morning sensuality—a sort of nostalgia for the floor. In the evening's title piece, Julie Carr and Lewis Bossing join the choreographer in a work that blends Carr's physicality with Bossing's softness. As the three dive, hit the floor, and roll, a video offers subliminal tidbits of explicit text. "That's the flood," Loring explains: "flood of desire, flood of images, flood of passion, flood of tears." (Dance Project, St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. April 18-21 at 8:30.)

MICHAEL MAO DANCE—The twelve-member troupe under the direction of the Shanghai-born choreographer performs "Presto Agitato/Adagio," "Migrations," and the premiere of "Octet," set to Beethoven, Mahler, and Mendelssohn, respectively. (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. April 18-20 at 8.)

BALLET BUILDERS—The sixth annual showcase offers six new works in the classical idiom, including choreography by the former N.Y.C.B. dancer Bart Cook, the current Ron Brown/Evidence dancer Fredrick Earl Mosley, and the Las Vegas-based choreographer Jenny Ballard. (Rose Penthouse, Lincoln Center. 924-0077. April 18-20 at 8 and April 21 at 3. Through April 28.)

FACE THE MUSIC AND DANCE—The Symphony Space series continues with the Pascal Rioult Dance Theatre and baritone saxophonist Hamiet Bluiett and the Bluiett 3. The dancers and musicians perform separate sets, then combine forces for a structured improvisation. (Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. April 18 at 8.)

ROSEANNE SPRADLIN—The choreographer performs solo in front of a projected film in the premiere of "Last Days of Summer." With "Desire," a quartet for three dancers and an actress, and the duet "Immunity." (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. April 18-21 at 8.)

DANCE AT THE WORLD FINANCIAL CENTER—Shapiro & Smith Dance, whose work is characterized by a seriousness that blends intense physicality with telling gesture, performs four works in a free concert at the Winter Garden. (Battery Park City. April 17 at 7. No tickets necessary.)

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

TEARS FOR FEARS—They're trading on a more bankable name, but this English act should really call itself the Roland Orzabal band. Having dispensed with his onetime partner, Curt Smith (you might remember them standing side by side to sing "Everybody Wants to Rule the World"), the brooding songwriter now wallows in his own lachrymose intensity. It was great on an eighties anthem like "Shout," but his recent material sounds like the warblings of a born-again Jungian. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. April 17 at 8.)

JOAN OSBORNE—As we predicted last year, "Relish" has made this radiant singer-songwriter from Kentucky into a household name. But no one could have ever imagined the uproar over her mega-hit, "One of Us." The mad-

irony and covered such subjects as enduring life in the ninth grade and "lying in bed just like Brian Wilson" during a creative slump. On their recent follow-up, "Maybe You Should Drive," the emotions were closer to the surface, the whimsy wryer, and the music lush—thanks to the production of Ben Mink, K. D. Lang's collaborator on "Ingenue." This show should provide a blast of wit and warmth from north of the border. With the Bogmen. (Roseland. April 20 at 7:30.)

EVERCLEAR—This Portland, Oregon, trio makes hard pop that leaves you misty-eyed for the early days of grunge. After a solid year of touring, the band has a hit with "Sparkle and Fade," a disk on which it powers through fourteen brutally melodic songs. Singer-guitarist Art Alexakis—a reformed junkie turned rock-and-roll dad—eloquently dissects, among other things, his delinquent youth and the drug-related deaths of his girlfriend and brother. (Roseland. April 21 at 7:30.)

ZUCCHERO—The Italian pop star. (Beacon Theatre. April 22 at 8.)

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Vocalist **WESLIA WHITFIELD** is currently in the midst of an extended run. A West Coast sensation, she has the poise, the diction, and the taste of a budding Mabel Mercer. Her program ranges over the standards, which she imbues with delicate swing and knowing wit. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through April 21: **IVAN LINS** is enormously popular in his native Brazil for his hip, intelligent songwriting. His most recent record, "Awa Yio," is a feast of jazzy salsa grooves and velvety Portuguese melodies. Starting April 23: The **HARRY (SWEETS) EDISON ALL STARS** and the **CLARK TERRY** quintet. A treat like the coming together of trumpeters Edison and Terry shouldn't be taken lightly. These hornmen have found diametrically opposed ways of expressing pure swing. Edison, a star of the classic Count Basie band, uses as few notes as possible to achieve a subtle nexus of tonal inflection and infectious rhythm. He's taken his former boss's pruning system to new extremes: what he could say in two notes he says in one, what he could say in one he says with a blurt. Terry is

a motormouth: spilling torrents on his trumpet or flugelhorn or just letting loose a wash of gibberish, he's ready to tell the world everything he's learned in a lifetime. Edison is terse and cagey, Terry garrulous and open. They're both incomparable. Dining.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—**BARBARA COOK** is in command of this urbane dinner-and-music room through late April, backed up by her longtime pianist and arranger Wally Harper. Her voice remains almost defiantly that of the nineteen-fifties Broadway ingénue, and her material is as winning as a fresh corsage. . . . ♪ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, pianist **PETER MINTUN** is in attendance.

IRIDIUM, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Starting April 23: the **CYRUS CHESTNUT** trio. During Chestnut's apprentice days with Betty Carter, it was obvious that his eminently smart and funky piano work portended something special. He's found a real voice, a blend of profound technique and playful eccentricity. He has the mischievous presence of an elf, but make no mistake: this pianist is a monster. Now and



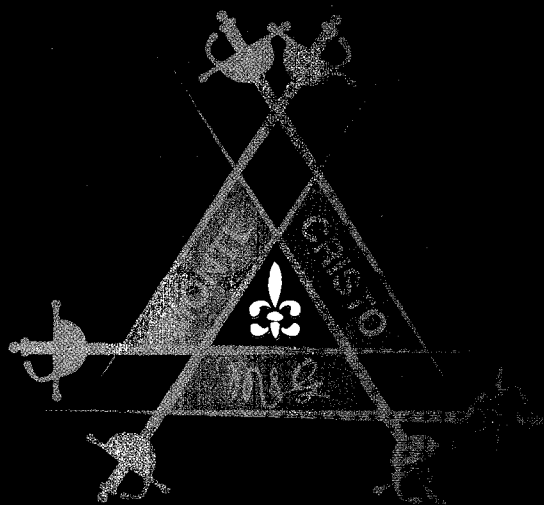
Merle Haggard, at Tramps.

dening hook of the lyric "What if God was one of us? / Just a slob like one of us?" has drawn charges ranging from blasphemy to brainwashing. Osborne is a late bloomer: she didn't release her first album, "Soul Show" (1991), until she was almost thirty. Obviously making up for lost time, she's now well on her way to becoming one of the most distinctive female singers in rock. Not bad for a woman who discovered her calling during a drunken open-mike session. (Roseland. April 18 at 8.)

GARBAGE—Top-of-the-line pop confection courtesy of three studio whiz kids from Madison, Wisconsin (including Butch Vig, the man behind the boards on Nirvana's "Nevermind"), and a supervixen singer from Scotland. Together, they create deliciously sinuous grooves, industrial loops, and dark effects. (Roseland. April 19 at 8.)

OTTMAR LIEBERT—The New Age guitar master. (Beacon Theatre. April 19 at 8.)

BARENAKED LADIES—Five fully clothed Canadian guys, actually. Their first album, "Gordon" (1992), featured jaunty, eccentric folkie songs that were tender, funny, and free of



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for the foreseeable future, Mondays belong to **LES PAUL**. We admire him for his Edison-like ingenuity (he perfected everything from the solid-body electric guitar to multitrack recording), but we listen to him for the beauty of his guitar playing, an amalgam of blues, jazz, country, pop, musical in-jokes, electronic tricks, and anything else this mad scientist/vaudevillian can coax out of strings and tubes. A pure product of grassroots show biz, he's a national treasure. Dining.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—April 17-20: Piano and bass with Steve Kuhn and David Finck.

KNITTING FACTORY, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—April 18: **ELLIOTT SHARP AND CARBON**. Sharp comes with his aberrant homemade double-neck guitar, a small factory of digital effects, and a craving for sounds not heard above Houston Street. April 20: The Acid Jazz Lounge. April 23: The **MATT SHIPP** trio, and a trio composed of **WOLFGANG MUTHSPIEL**, **MARC JOHNSON**, and **PAUL MOTIAN**. Shipp's trio balances his post-Cecil Taylor piano eruptions with pools of lyric calm. German guitarist Muthspiel has been blessed with an interactive band that could transport any soloist into a higher realm. Johnson, a brainy player, was Bill Evans's last bassist. Motian, who made his name with Evans twenty-five years before Johnson, has become one of our greatest drummers: he has a loose, down-home sound and he swings like mad.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—At the start of his career, in the post-war forties and fifties, **VIC DAMONE** (through late April) embodied the placid opulence of the era: he was polite and handsome, and his voice was as smooth and lustrous as silk taffeta (and just as stiff). He had a little success in Hollywood and a bit more on vinyl, but above all it's the years of supper clubs and casinos that have given him the distinctive ease that the Bill Murrays and Harry Connicks of the world can only parody or covet. He doesn't swing, but his phrasing is conversational, as are his wonderful stories about growing up in Bensonhurst—and the voice itself is still something to marvel at. Dining.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Pianist **LARRY WILLIS** (through April 21) is part of the second flowering of jazzmen who gained fame in the sixties, lost ground during the ensuing two decades, and returned in the nineties fully matured. Like his peers Eddie Henderson and Gary Bartz, Willis has retained his original energy and density while unearthing new depths of meaning in his improvisations. His easy, unmannered modal-bop explorations, ripe with rhythm and funky flavoring, should be carefully studied by today's young players. Dining.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through April 21: the **CHRISTIAN MC BRIDE** quartet. This bassist, one of the most assured musicians of his generation, is a dream combination of Ray Brown and Paul Chambers. He can astonish as a sideman; in his new role as bandleader, his potential is unlimited. The **LOU DONALDSON** quartet takes over on April 23. With one foot in well-turned bop soil and the other in R. & B. territory, Donaldson, an alto saxophonist, pledges allegiance to both virtuosity and entertainment. He's got the credentials (he was a first-edition member of Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, playing alongside Clifford Brown), and his timing—as a bop soloist and as a standup comic—has never been better. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

VISIONES, 125 Macdougall St., at W. 3rd St. (673-5576)—April 17-20: **BRUCE BARTH**. Having made his mark in Terence Blanchard's band, this pianist—a young modernist in the manner of Herbie Hancock—enters the fray on his own.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—Through April 20: piano and bass with **JOANNE BRACKEEN** and **CECIL MC BEE**.

ROCK, ETC.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—April 17: The **BILL MORRISSEY** band. A lot of singer-songwriters can boast of being literate, but not many have a new record ("You'll Never Get to Heaven") and a new novel ("Edson"), too. In both mediums, this gentle New Englander displays an extraordinary flair for detail. April 23: **CESARIA EVORA**. A breath of cool tropical air from São Vicente (a tiny port island off the coast of Senegal), Evora is known as the Barefoot Diva, a reference both to her performance style and to the earthy, laid-back feel of *morna*, the

IRVING PLAZA, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—April 17: **SALIF KEITA**. The albino singer from Mali, who first achieved renown with the folk-rumba group Les Ambassadeurs, has become one of West Africa's most popular musical exports. Like the Senegalese star Youssou N'Dour, he has used his international cachet to entice some noted Western musicians, including Wayne Shorter and Carlos Santana, onto his records. Although he sings in Bambara, Keita's fluid, sensuous voice needs no translation.

MAXWELL's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (1-201-798-4064)—April 18: The Wrens. April 21: **SKELETON KEY**.

MERCURY LOUNGE, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—April 18: **GO TO BLAZES**. April 21: **JOY ASKEW**.

RODEO BAR, 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—The walls simulate a log cabin, smoke blows through the nostrils of a buffalo head, a horse trailer has been converted into a bar, and you get peanuts for eating and, sometimes, throwing.

S.O.B.'s, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut with a fruit-and-bamboo motif, dedicated to calypso, reggae, and the bossa nova. Dining.

SUPPER CLUB, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—April 20: **JODY WATLEY** first made a name for herself in the mid-seventies as a featured terpsichorean on "Soul Train." In 1977, she joined the great disco trio Shalamar. Later on, after a brief exile in England, she re-emerged as a lithe and lean diva with an eponymous solo debut (a collaboration with former Prince sideman Andre Cymone) that included the club anthem "Looking for a New Love." Her follow-up, "Larger Than Life," was just as successful. After a few lesser efforts, she returned last year with the stunning "Affection." Live, she's still alluring and hypnotic.

TRAMPS, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—April 17: **ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL**. Over the course of the band's twenty-five year history, leader Ray Benson has reportedly seen more than seventy-five different musicians pass through the ranks. The group's latest album is called "The Wheel Keeps On Rollin'" and as the title suggests, they should roll merrily on into the next century. April 18: **DAVE MASON**. During the late sixties and early seventies, this guitarist's guitar was everywhere: he recorded with Traffic, Delaney and Bonnie, Jimi Hendrix, and George Harrison. After disappearing for a spell, he turned up last year as a member of the reconstituted Fleetwood Mac. April 19: **MERLE HAGGARD**. A rare club performance by the grizzled, ornery master of drivin', drinkin', and thinkin' songs. With the near-simultaneous release of a handsome four-CD box, "Down Every Road," and an excellent new album, "1996," the singer's claim to a place in the country pantheon is secure. The numerous photographs in the boxed set remind you that the young Haggard had killer-diller good looks; the songs on the new record reassure you that the bard of Bakersfield is still alive and kicking. April 20: **VELOCITY GIRL** and **FUZZY**. The D.C.-based band Velocity Girl specializes in shiny, happy indie pop. Over the course of seven years and three albums the band has gotten its shtick down pat—so pat, in fact, that "Gilded Stars and Zealous Hearts," its current release, is often a downright bore. While there's nothing technically wrong with its meticulously crafted songs—some of them jangle quite brilliantly—a few twists in the formula wouldn't hurt. Hearing the group live, though, you'll be too busy bouncing around to notice. Show up early for the cuddly Boston band Fuzzy, a group that knows how to put a little muscle into its act. They'll be showcasing their irresistible sophomore album, "Electric Juices." **WEBSTER HALL**, 125 E. 11th St. (353-1600)—A byzantine disco wonderland with four floors, a coffee shop, and a wig boutique. Wednesday is drag night. Psychedelic Thursdays feature grunge acts and cheap beer.

ONLY CONNECT



Web Sightings

ADAWEB (<http://adaweb.com>)—If conceptual art often infuriates viewers into fuming, "I could do better than that," then a truly interactive conceptual-art site should allow them to try. The cybergallery Adaweb (they spell it ada 'web) was launched last June by a group of New York artists with "Please Change Beliefs," a "media-specific experience" by the downtown propagandist Jenny Holzer. Beneath a list of Holzer's typically ambiguous dicta ("Expiring for love is beautiful but stupid"; "Lack of charisma can be fatal") is an invitation to join in the fun: "To improve or replace the truism, click here," a dialogue box instructs you, promising that your version will be added to a new master list.

The directionals here can seem murky: "extension" takes you to the links page (connecting you to other art sites), "exchange" to the Adaweb store, where you can buy T-shirts and baseball caps printed with some of Holzer's better-known expressions ("Protect me from what I want"). "Influx" and "project" lead to the art sites themselves: exhibitions in cyberspace, subject to change, with your participation. "We Both Belong" is Ben Kinnom's rather touching meditation on the importance of doing the dishes. "As an artist, I view domestic activity as sculpture," he has written beneath a photo of himself busting suds. He invites viewers to send in pictures (by mail or E-mail) of themselves washing the dishes, along with their thoughts, and these images and words become part of the show. A man who identifies himself only as Kenny has contributed a photograph of himself asleep beside a pile of dirty plates. "Given your enthusiasm for dishes," he writes, "my wife-to-be should be marrying you!" Now that's interactive.

dreamy bossa-nova blues that makes her eponymous recent release on Nonesuch so delightful. Although she's a star in France, she rarely performs in the States, which makes this appearance a special occasion. **CAFÉ SIN-É**, 122 St. Marks Pl. (982-0370)—April 23: The excellent singer-songwriter **JACK MC KEEVER**. **CHICAGO B.L.U.E.S.**, 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (924-9755)—April 19-20: The **HOLMES BROTHERS**. There's no meteoric rags-to-riches story here. After more than twenty-five years in the business, this impossibly great band finally made its first album in 1989. The Holmes Brothers have it all: blues, soul, gospel, R. & B., and country, along with a poise that lends the mix an authority that younger, looser groups can't touch.

FEZ, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—April 23: The brilliant young folksinger **PATTI GRIFFIN**. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—“Splendors of Imperial China.” The most magnificent exhibition of the season—a superbly mounted selection of more than four hundred objects from the National Palace Museum, in Taipei—amounts to a fairly complete synopsis of Chinese art in all mediums. The objects range from Neolithic jade disks to decadent, Western-influenced paintings from the reign (1736-95) of the Ch’ien-lung emperor, whose personal collection forms the basis of the Palace Museum’s holdings. The level of connoisseurship is unsurpassed. A porcelain bowl, vase, and dish from the Sung dynasty, all three in robin’s-egg blue, approach perfection. Most impressive of all are the nearly life-size imperial portraits, which are rendered with a razor-sharp clarity. Through May 19. . . . Among the designers represented at the Costume Institute in “Bare Witness: Clothing and Nudity,” a history of concealment and exposure in fashion from the eighteenth century on, are Madame Grès, Halston, Gianni Versace, Rudi Gernreich, and Mary Quant. . . . “Fabergé in America.” Fifteen of the forty-four extant imperial Easter eggs are on view in this exhibit of works from American collections, along with more than four hundred baskets, vases, table clocks, cigarette boxes, and other delights. Through April 28. . . . “Making Music: Two Centuries of Musical Instrument Making in New York” includes everything from recorders to steel drums to a theremin. Through July 28. . . . “Modern Glass in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.” . . . Sixteenth- to eighteenth-century paintings, textiles, and metalwork from the Deccan, the plateau region of south-central India, are on display in “Art of the Deccani Sultans.” . . . “Enamels of Limoges,” a slew of precious objects—medallions, reliquaries, portable altars, and such—dating from the twelfth century through the fourteenth, from the French town’s abbey workshops. Through June 16. . . . Lesser-known and experimental color prints by artists employed by the W.P.A. Through May 26. . . . “Picturing Paradise: Colonial Photography of Samoa, 1875-1925.” (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—“Brancusi,” a tantalizing mini-retrospective of twenty-four sculptures that represent the master at his best. Through April 23. . . . A large retrospective of black-and-white photographs from the late forties to the present by Roy DeCarava. Among the subjects are jazz musicians, street and subway life, and urban civil-rights protests. Through May 7. . . . “Come Sunday: Photographs by Thomas Roma.” Strikingly candid black-and-white pictures of African-American parishioners deep in prayer in Brooklyn churches. Through June 18. . . . Three video works by Hirsch Perlman, with photographs and text, are in the “Projects” space. Through May 21. . . . A recently acquired dark-blue example of the 1963 Jaguar E-type is on view. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—“Abstraction in the Twentieth Century: Total Risk, Freedom, Discipline.” This exhibition is chockablock with masterpieces—from early Kandinskys and Maleviches to the mute totems of minimalism which have dominated abstract art since the sixties—but some of the elisions are galling. Where are Hans Hofmann, Kenneth Noland, Morris Louis? Why so few women? Why *nine* Rymans but not even one Marden? And why no artists who came to the fore after the seventies? In short, a beautiful failure. Through May 12. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A retrospective of a hundred assemblages, constructed from scavenged street and flea-market materials, by Edward Kien-

holz (1927-94) and Nancy Reddin Kienholz. Through June 2. . . . “An American Story,” a chronological survey of twentieth-century painting and sculpture, both well-known and obscure, from the museum’s collection. . . . “Willem de Kooning’s Door Cycle.” A display of four paintings from the mid-sixties on long, narrow doors, supplemented by several related works and by Hans Namuth’s photographs of de Kooning. Through May 26. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St.—Large-format black-and-white and color photographs documenting a hundred endangered North American plants and animals. . . . “Amber: Window to the Past.” (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—A large number of paintings, sculptures, costumes, and religious objects from the vicerealties of New Spain and Peru are on view in “Converging Cultures: Art & Identity in Spanish America.” Through July 14. . . . Seventy paintings by the American Thomas Wilmer Dewing (1851-1938), whose atmospheric landscapes and genre scenes of ladies in drawing rooms exhibit a distinctive treatment of space. Through June 9. . . . “Alone in a Crowd: Prints by African-American Artists from the 1930s-1940s.” Through April 21. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

AMERICAN CRAFT MUSEUM, 40 W. 53rd St.—“Form-Light-Glass: Contemporary Glass from the Czech Republic” features seven large sculptures by glass artists Stanislav Libenský and Jaroslava Brychtová, Václav Cigler, Marian Karel, Vladimír Kopecký, and Dana Zámečnicková. . . . A display of kaleidoscopic glass mosaics from the past twenty years by Klaus Moje. . . . “The Art of Peter Voulkos.” Sculptures from the late fifties to the present by the influential ceramist. All three shows through June 9. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

ASIA SOCIETY, Park Ave. at 70th St.—“Worlds Within Worlds.” Centuries before Marcel Duchamp began exhibiting found objects as art, Chinese artists and scholars were collecting fantastically shaped rocks both for their formal beauty and as aids to inspiration. Used

as elements of landscape design or mounted on wooden stands in a scholar’s study, eccentric rocks were prized by connoisseurs as early as the Sung dynasty (960-1279); by the era of the Cultural Revolution they had been forgotten. The sculptor and commercial artist Richard Rosenblum has been collecting them for more than twenty years, and seventy choice specimens of his are on display in this strange, boundary-stretching exhibition: if the objects are to be appreciated as anything more than historical oddities, the viewer’s imagination has to do the work. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8; Sundays, noon to 5.)

JEWISH MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—“Marc Chagall, 1907-1917.” A selection of oils, gouaches, and drawings from the painter’s early years in Vitebsk, St. Petersburg, and Paris. . . . Obsessive, confrontational, and humorous attitudes in contemporary art are the focus of a show called “Too Jewish? Challenging Traditional Identities.” Among the artists involved are Deborah Kass, Neil Goldberg, Elaine Reichek, Art Spiegelman, and Hannah Wilke. Through July 14. (Open Mondays through Thursdays, 11 to 5:45, and Tuesday evenings until 8; Sundays, 10 to 5:45.)

MUSEO DEL BARRIO, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—Two works by the writer and filmmaker Leandro Katz: a few dozen photographs and a large photo-based installation from “The Catherwood Project,” and “Project for the Day You’ll Love Me,” which is concerned with the last eleven months in the life of Che Guevara. Through May 5. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

MUSEUM OF AMERICAN FOLK ART, Columbus Ave. at 65th St.—“Discovering Ellis Ruley.” Sixty works by the African-American coal miner and construction laborer (1882-1959) who for the last twenty years of his life painted portraits of pop-culture celebrities, exotic landscapes, and idyllic farmscapes. Through April 28. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11:30 to 7:30.)

STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM, 144 W. 125th St.—“Explorations in the City of Light” presents paintings and sculptures by seven African-American artists who lived in Paris between 1945 and 1965: Edward Clark, Barbara Chase-Riboud, Harold Cousins, Beauford Delaney, Herbert Gentry, Lois Mailou Jones, and Larry Potter. . . . “The Listening Sky,” a display of works in the museum’s new sculpture garden. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

JIM DINE—The sculptures of antiquity inspired the artists of the Renaissance; now a modern master offers his take on these touchstones of the Western tradition in “Some Greeks, Some Romans,” a suite of a hundred and fifty drawings. Ranging from straightforward charcoal or pencil studies to heavily built-up Expressionistic drawings in pastels, chalk, and crayon, Dine’s draftsmanly tour de force demonstrates a profoundly humanistic sensibility and considerable technical virtuosity. Through April 27. (Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St.)

CLIFFORD ODETS (1906-63)—“In Hell & Why,” a group of rarely viewed paintings on paper, made during the playwright’s bouts of



“Bare Witness: Clothing and Nudity,” at the Met.

insomnia and procrastination. Through June 8. (Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St.)

KRZYSZTOF WODICZKO—"Xenology: Immigrant Instruments" features two works designed by the artist, along with earlier versions and documentation of their use. "Alien Staff" is a walking stick topped with a small video monitor; "Porte-Parole" is a strap-on TV mouthpiece that replaces the act of speech with a videotaped version. Through April 27. (Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.)

"THE ART OF IVORY"—A remarkable exhibition of a hundred and thirty carvings originally commissioned by Portuguese missionaries in Goa and Ceylon, and now in the collection of the Museu Histórico Nacional, in Rio de Janeiro. The sculptures, which piquantly blend European and Asian sensibilities, are exquisitely wrought and curious in the extreme. A reclining Christ child echoes the familiar image of the sleeping Buddha; a touching little St. Sebastian, pinned to his tree, evokes Shiva's incarnation as Lord of the Cosmic Dance. Through April 28. (Americas Society, Park Ave. at 68th St. Open daily, except Mondays, noon to 6.)

"COMIC INSPIRATIONS"—The influence of comic-strip imagery in painting, drawing, and sculpture since the sixties, by such artists as Philip Guston, Peter Saul, Sue Williams, Lari Pittman, Elena Sisto, and Archie Rand. Through April 27. (Baumgold, 128 E. 72nd St.)

"VIEWS FROM A GOLDEN HILL"—Paintings and other works by recent fellows of the American Academy in Rome: Christopher Wool, Judith Shea, Ann McCoy, Kristin Jones/Andrew Ginzell, and Drew Beattie & Daniel Davidson. Through April 27. (Equitable, Seventh Ave. at 52nd St. Open Mondays.)

GROUP SHOW—A benefit exhibition includes small-scale paintings, sculptures, and photographs by Pat Adams, Mary Frank, Lee Friedlander, Man Ray, and others. Through April 20. (Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. For more information, call 752-1223.)

SHORT LIST—**ARMAN**, Janis, 110 W. 57th St. Through April 27. . . . **MILTON AVERY**, Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St., and Long, 24 W. 57th St. Both shows through April 27. . . . **WILL BARNET**, Dintenfass, 20 E. 79th St. Through April 27. . . . **KATHERINE BOWLING**, Helman, 20 W. 57th St. Through May 4. . . . **SUE COE**, Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St. Through May 24. . . . **WILLEM DE KOONING**, C & M Arts, 45 E. 78th St. Through June 1. . . . **ROBERT GRAHAM**, Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. Through April 20. . . . **NANCY GRAVES**, Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. Through May 24. . . . **AL HELD**, Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. Through May 11. . . . **JAMES HYDE**, Baldacci, 41 E. 57th St. Through May 4. . . . **ALEX KATZ**, Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays; through May 11. . . . **AGNES MARTIN**, Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. Through April 27. . . . **JOAN MITCHELL**, Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. Through May 4. . . . **JOAN SNYDER**, Hirschl & Adler Modern, 21 E. 70th St. Through May 11. . . . **WILLIAM TUCKER**, McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through May 25. . . . **TOM WESSELMANN**, Janis, 110 W. 57th St. Through May 4.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

GREGORY GREEN—"For Information Purposes Only," an installation of homemade bombs—book bombs, pipe bombs, suitcase bombs, napalm. In each case, one crucial element is missing; the artist provides instructions for completion. (Really.) Through April 27. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

JONATHAN LASKER—New oils by a leading American practitioner of conceptual painting. Coming as they do on the heels of the recent Sperone and Pace shows devoted to Julian Schnabel's painterly braggadocio, they will strike some viewers as a clearheaded tonic and others as a chilly academic exercise. When eclecticism rules, it all comes down to taste: do you want your pictures sloppy and sexy or prim and clever? Through April 27. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

WALTER ROBINSON—Spin paintings. A decade ago, the artist started using carnival means to make these high-art hybrids of Abstract Expressionism, color-field painting, and Op art; though his gesture had an unmistak-

ably Dadaist edge, the pictures are often surprisingly beautiful. (Recently the British enfant terrible Damien Hirst has also turned to spin paintings, some of which may soon be on view at Gagosian.) Through April 27. (Grand Salon, 83 Grand St. Opens at noon.)

MEG WEBSTER—It's billed as a drawing show, but it certainly challenges conventional notions of the medium. Webster became prominent in the eighties as a sort of neo-earthworks artist, building imposing installations of salt, soil, and wax. For her "drawings," she uses egg, sugar, blood, chocolate, butter, or even cascading water. While a shiny rectangle of molasses on paper reflects the viewer—dimly, distortedly—many of the



Krzysztof Wodiczko, at Galerie Lelong.

works exhibit the impassive, opaque materiality of Richard Serra's oil-stick drawings. Hmm. Through April 26. (Morris Healy, 530 W. 22nd St. Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6.)

ERIC WOLF—Landscape paintings rendered in heavy, looping, somewhat schematic black brushstrokes against white grounds. At times the figurative elements—trees, rocks, clouds, streams—are virtually lost in dense whorls of abstract patterning. Through April 21. (Fredericks, 504 W. 22nd St. Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6.)

"ART FROM TANZANIA"—A large display of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century masks, grave markers, ceremonial staffs, thrones, and more. Through April 27. (Sonabend, 420 West Broadway.)

"50/50"—A benefit exhibit for the Skowhegan summer residency program for artists, which turns fifty this year. On view are works by fifty former residents, including Richard Tuttle, Anish Kapoor, Bill Jensen, Elizabeth Murray, and Claes Oldenburg. Through April 27. (Pace Wildenstein, 142 Greene St.)

"IN QUEST OF THE ABSOLUTE"—Ten paintings by twentieth-century artists who have pursued spiritual paths, among them Malevich, Mondrian, Rothko, Reinhardt, Martin, and Ryman. Through June 8. (Blum, 99 Wooster St.)

SHORT LIST—**MATTHEW ABBOTT**, Boesky and Callery, 51 Greene St. Through April 27. . . . **NANCY BALLIETT**, Atlantic, 475 Broome St. Open daily, except Mondays, noon to 6; through April 27. . . . **WILL BERRY**, Arstark, 568 Broadway. Through May 11. . . . **DAN FLAVIN**, Pace Wildenstein, 142 Greene St. Through April 27. . . . **DON GUMMER**, Sperone Westwater, 121 Greene St. Through May 4. . . . **GEORGE HO**, 163 Mercer, 163 Mercer St. Through April 27. . . . **CHARLES LE DRAY**, Gorney, 100 Greene St. Through May 11. . . . **JACK PIERSON**, Lühring Augustine, 130 Prince St. Through May 4. . . . **BLAKE RAYNE**,

Greene Naftali, 526 W. 26th St. Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 6; through May 4. . . . **MIA WESTERLUND ROOSEN**, Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway. Through April 27. . . . **ERIKA ROTHENBERG**, P.P.O.W., 532 Broadway. Through April 20. . . . **PETER SCHUYFF**, Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St. Through April 20. . . . **MEYER VAISMAN**, 303 Gallery, 89 Greene St. Through April 20. . . . **ROBERT WILSON**, Cooper, 155 Wooster St. Through April 27. . . . **ROB WYNNE**, Holly Solomon, 172 Mercer St. Through May 4.

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

CHRISTIE'S—April 17: Silver. . . . April 18: Russian art, including a magnificent Fabergé clock created for the twenty-fifth wedding anniversary of Alexander III and his czarina, Maria Feodorovna. . . . April 23: An important sale of photography, including thirty-six images by the American modernist Paul Outerbridge, Jr., and all twenty portfolios of Edward S. Curtis's large-format photogravures of North American Indians. (Park Ave. at 59th St. 546-1000.) . . . At Christie's East: On April 17, an auction of autographs, by, among others, Sigmund Freud, Juan Perón, and Maria Callas. (219 E. 67th St.)

SOOTHEY'S—A photography auction, including four hundred and fifty daguerreotypes from the collection of Abraham Stransky. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000. April 18.)

DOYLE'S—Victorian, Art Nouveau, and Art Deco objects and paintings, primarily, as well as a large collection of Lalique. Among the items of more recent vintage is a set of four chairs (executed by John Risley in 1960) in which ultra-sturdy wires have been twisted to resemble praying nuns. (175 E. 87th St. 427-2730. April 17 at 10.)

SWANN'S—Renaissance to twentieth-century rare books. (104 E. 25th St. 254-4710. April 18 at 10:30.)

ANTIQUARIAN BOOK FAIR—A hundred and forty dealers assemble for the thirty-sixth installment of this annual event. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. April 19-21. Tickets at the door.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

FERENC BERKO—Pictures from the thirties and forties, including many glamorous nudes, light-handed photojournalistic images made in European capitals and in India, semi-abstract views of Chicago, and pioneering color work from 1947 to 1949. Through May 4. (Richardson, 560 Broadway.)

LEONARD FREED—"Collected Poems," a retrospective of this Magnum photographer's career. Through April 24. (Leica, 670 Broadway. Opens Saturdays at noon.)

WILLIAM KLEIN—An exhibit of previously unpublished pictures from "New York 1954.55," a reedited and redesigned version of the photographer's 1956 book, "Life Is Good and Good for You in New York." Through May 11. (Greenberg and Gallery 292, 120 Wooster St.)

IRVING PENN—Portraits and still-lives from throughout the artist's career, including twenty-three silver, platinum, and Cibachrome prints not shown before and recent experimental works. Through May 11. (Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St.)

PAUL STRAND (1890-1976)—Portraits of the artist's wife, Rebecca Salisbury, taken and printed between 1920 and 1932. Through May 4. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.—"Josef Sudek: The Pigment Prints, 1947-1954." Still-lives of eggs and bread, glasses of water and beer, nudes, Prague castles and gardens, all of them contact prints made with charcoal, carbon, and carbro pro-

cesses. Through July 7. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY MIDTOWN, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St.—“Horst: A Retrospective.” Elegant, meticulous fashion photography is his hallmark, but this comprehensive survey also includes portraits (Dietrich, Cocteau, Chanel), society interiors, abstract studies, and nudes. Through June 2. . . . ¶ “Intimate Nature: Ansel Adams and the Close View.” Closeups that complement the artist’s panoramic visions. Through June 2. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

“**CHICAGO PHOTOGRAPHY, 1935-1965**”—Pictures by thirty artists who worked and taught in the “city of the big shoulders,” including Moholy-Nagy, Kepes, Siegel, Callahan, Siskind, Metzger, and Ishimoto. Through May 31. (Danziger, 130 Prince St.)

SHORT LIST—**RICHARD ARTSCHWAGER**, Saul, 560 Broadway. Through April 27. . . . **UTA BARTH**, Bonakdar, 130 Prince St. Through April 20. . . . **PAUL CAPONIGRO**, Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. Through April 27. . . . **FRANK MAJORE**, Borden, 560 Broadway. Through April 27. . . . **MARIKO MORI**, Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. Through April 27. . . . **MARK MORRISROE**, Hearn, 530 W. 22nd St. Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6; through April 28. . . . **BASTIENNE SCHMIDT**, Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St. Through May 18. . . . **STEFAN THEMERSON**, Ubu, 16 E. 78th St. Through April 27. . . . **ARTHUR TRESS**, Houk Friedman, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. Through May 11. . . . **DAVID VESTAL**, Mann, 42 E. 76th St. Through April 27. . . . **LISA YOUNG**, Wessel O’Connor, 60 Thomas St., between Church St. and West Broadway. Opens at noon; through April 27.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, the American Museum of Natural History, and El Museo del Barrio.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 875-5050; for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800; for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 501-3330; and for the 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 996-1100.)

OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA—**LA BOHÈME**, with Cristina Gallardo-Domas, Karita Mattila, Roberto Alagna, and Dwayne Croft; conducted by Simone Young. (April 17 and April 20 at 8.) . . . **ROMÉO ET JULIETTE**, by Gounod, with Ruth Ann Swenson and Richard Leech; Edoardo Müller. (April 18 at 8.) . . . With Hei-Kyung Hong instead of Ms. Swenson. (April 22 at 8.) . . . **ANDREA CHÉNIER**, with Aprile Mollo, Luciano Pavarotti, and Juan Pons; James Levine. (April 19 at 8.) . . . **DIE WALKÜRE**, with Gabriele Schnaut, Deborah Voigt, Hanna Schwarz, Plácido Domingo, Robert Hale, and John Macurdy; Mr. Levine. (April 20 at 12:30 and April 23 at 6:30.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—Final performances of the season. **THE DREYFUS AFFAIR**. (April 17 at 8.) . . . **THE MIKADO**. (April 18 at 8.) . . . **THE MERRY WIDOW**, performed in English. (April 19 at 8.) . . . **ATTILA**. (April 20 at 1:30.) . . . **THE MAGIC FLUTE**, in English. (April 20 at 8.) . . . **RIGOLETTO**. (April 21 at 1:30.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

OPERA ORCHESTRA OF NEW YORK—This concert performance of Rossini’s 1817 opera “Armida” has been awaited as a highlight of the season. Soprano Renée Fleming, whose recorded performance in the title role (on a set released a year and a half ago by Sony Classical) set the opera world afire, joins such capable tenors as Gregory Kunde and Bruce Fowler. (The score requires six tenors, but a single singer can handle two roles, at least in con-

cert; the challenge of assembling even five tenors explains why the work is rarely performed.) Eve Queler conducts. (Carnegie Hall. April 17 at 8.)

JUILLIARD OPERA CENTER—In a staged production of “Le Nozze di Figaro.” (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. 769-7406. April 17 and April 19 at 8 and April 21 at 2.)

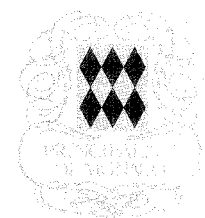
ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—Valery Gergiev conducts Shostakovich’s orchestral song cycle “From Jewish Folk Poetry” (featuring soprano Marina Shaguch, contralto Larissa Diadkova, and tenor Constantin Pluzhnikov) and his Symphony No. 4. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. April 18-20 at 8 and April 23 at 7:30.)

CONCERT ROYAL—James Richman leads the period-instrument ensemble in music from the German High Baroque, by Handel, Telemann, Georg Muffat, and C. P. E. Bach. (Merkin Concert Hall. April 17 at 8.)

THE TALLIS SCHOLARS—The a-cappella ensemble, directed by Peter Phillips, performs music from Tudor England, including works by John Taverner, Robert Fayrfax, Thomas Tallis, and Richard Davy. (Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, Park Ave. at 84th St. 288-2520. April 18 at 8.)

ENSEMBLE MODERN—The twenty-six members of this Frankfurt-based chamber orchestra arrive in New York midway through their first American tour, with two dozen recordings of twentieth-century repertoire serving as advance calling cards. The group’s eclectic discography ranges from Ives, Schoenberg, and Hindemith to Frank Zappa, paying extensive homage to Henze and Kagel en route. (Though all their recordings are polished, some are more successful than others. Their Kurt Weill collection on Largo, “Berlin im Licht,” is a model of program-



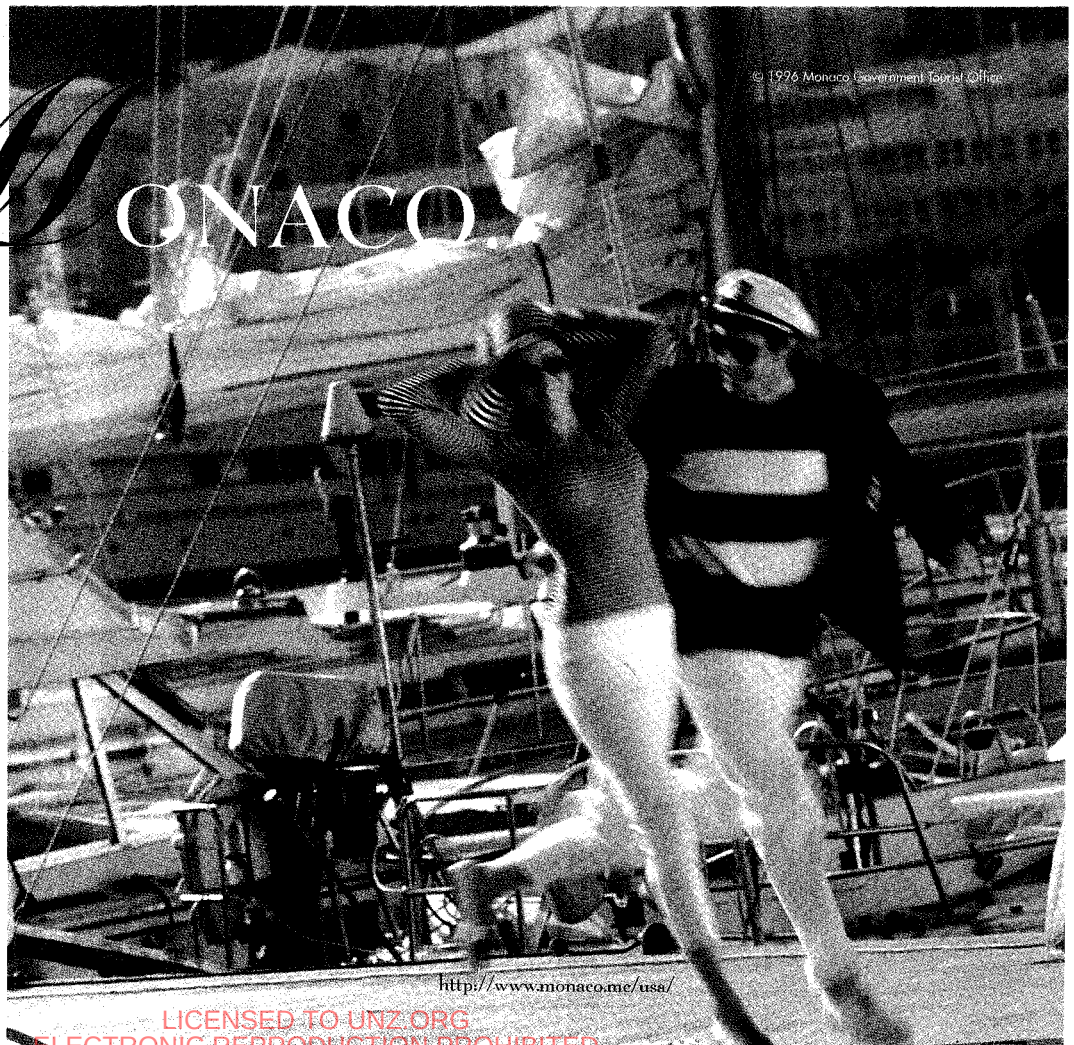
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ming, performance, and packaging; their reading, with tenor Hans-Peter Blochwitz, of Hans Zender's reinterpretation of Schubert's "Winterreise," on BMG, is bizarre.) In this concert, the players present a cross-section of their interests: Varèse's "Octandre," three of Conlon Nancarrow's Studies for Player Piano (as realized by the late Yvar Mikhashoff), several items by Zappa, premières of pieces by Wolfgang Rihm and John Adams (who will conduct), as well as Mr. Adams's Chamber Symphony. (Alice Tully Hall. April 20 at 8.)

ST. CECILIA CHOIR AND ORCHESTRA—David Randolph directs Berlioz's Requiem. (Carnegie Hall. April 20 at 8.)

NEW YORK CHAMBER SYMPHONY—Joseph Silverstein leads an all-Mozart program that comprises the "Schauspieldirektor" Overture, the D-Minor Piano Concerto (with Cecile Licad), and the "Haffner" Serenade (with Mr. Silverstein doubling as the violin soloist). (92nd Street Y. April 20 at 8.... ♪ Alice Tully Hall. April 21 at 5.)

MUSIC BY XENAKIS—The composer Iannis Xenakis comes to town for his first visit in a decade. Born in Romania, in 1922, he moved with his family to Greece, their ancestral homeland, when he was ten.

He became involved with the Greek resistance movement (as was de rigueur for Greek composers of his generation) but in 1947 left the turmoil behind and moved to Paris. There, he served as Le Corbusier's architectural assistant, studied composition with Honegger, Milhaud, and Messiaen, and emerged in the sixties as a cult hero to both the French revolutionaries and the electroacoustic avant-garde. His compositions tend to exemplify abstruse principles of mathematics; their titles are sometimes numerical notations, but more often Greek terms with philosophical connotations. Nonetheless, his output is ear music as much as it is mind music, engaging to listeners who aren't dead set against sonic innovation. April 21 at 2:30: The ST-X Ensemble Xenakis USA, directed by Charles Zachary Bornstein, performs five of the composer's works dating from 1964 to 1994. (92nd Street Y.... NOTE: Mr. Xenakis offers a pre-concert commentary at 2, open to ticket holders.)... ♪ April 23 at 8: An all-Xenakis program, with Juan Pablo Izquierdo conducting the Carnegie-Mellon University Philharmonic Orchestra. (Carnegie Hall.)

MET ORCHESTRA—Performing Bartók's Violin Concerto No. 2 (with Sarah Chang) and his "Miraculous Mandarin" Suite, as well as Brahms's First Symphony, with James Levine on the podium. (Carnegie Hall. April 21 at 3.)

CINCINNATI SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA—Jesús López-Cobos conducts Weber's "Oberon" Overture, Schumann's Piano Concerto (with Christian Zacharias), and Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5. (Carnegie Hall. April 22 at 8.)

CLARION CONCERTS—Newell Jenkins conducts music by Sammartini, Mendelssohn, Baldassarre Galuppi, and the eighteenth-century Czech composer Jan Adam František de Paula Mica. (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. April 22 at 8.)

RECITALS

GUARNERI QUARTET—April 17 at 8: Performing string quartets by Beethoven (in C Minor, Op. 18, No. 4) and Janáček (his Second, "Intimate Letters"), as well as Brahms's Piano Quintet (with Alicia de Larrocha). (Alice Tully Hall.)... ♪ April 20 at 8: Quartets by Mozart (in D Major, K. 499) and Schumann (his Third), as well as John Harbison's "The Rewaking" (with soprano Benita Valente). (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949.)

BARGEMUSIC—Presenting chamber music for three, four, and five string instruments: Dvořák's Terzetto for Two Violins and Viola, Borodin's String Quartet No. 2, and Glazunov's Cello Quintet (Op. 39). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. April 18 at 7:30 and April 21 at 4.)

PINCHAS ZUKERMAN AND MARC NEIKRUG—The violinist and the pianist offer Beethoven's Sonatas No. 5 (the "Spring"), No. 6, and No. 7. (Carnegie Hall. April 18 at 8.)

NEW JUILLIARD ENSEMBLE—The contemporary-music group presents works by Babbitt, Louis Andriessen, Sofia Gubaidulina, Jacqueline Fontyn, and Jerome Kitzke. (Alice Tully Hall. April 19 at 8. For information

by Shostakovich; with pianist Itamar Golan. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. April 21 at 3.)

MATTHIAS GÖRNE—This German baritone, a protégé of both Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, has earned a stellar reputation on European stages, and his mellifluous, highly inflected singing is turning up regularly on recordings (most recently a fine reading of Mendelssohn's "Paulus," conducted by Philippe Herreweghe, on Harmonia Mundi). Dedicated lieder lovers might well charter a bus in order to race across town from Anne Sofie von Otter's recital, since attendance at both of these New York début recitals is all but mandatory—the more so since Görne's collaborator, the pianist Graham Johnson, is so accomplished as to be a draw in his own right. Görne and Johnson offer lieder by Schubert, Brahms (his "Vier Ernste Gesänge"), Mahler ("Rückert-Lieder"), and Wolf ("Mörike-Lieder"). (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. 288-0700. April 21 at 5.)

BANG ON A CAN ALL-STAR—Presenting music from the cutting edge, by Mikel Rouse and Hermeto Pascoal, among others. (Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. April 22 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 875-5050.)

CHANTICLEER—The men's vocal ensemble offers a wide-ranging program, assisted by the American Boychoir. (Temple of Dendur, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. April 23 at 8.)

CHAMBER MUSIC AT THE Y—Viola quintets by Mendelssohn and Dvořák, as well as Mozart's Oboe Quartet. (92nd Street Y. April 23-24 at 8.)

ALSO OF INTEREST

DICAPPO OPERA COMPANY: Weill's "Threepenny Opera." (Dicapo Opera Theatre, 184 E. 76th St. 288-9438. April 18-20 at 8.)...

NEW YORK POPS: An all-American program. (Carnegie Hall. April 19 at 8.)... **AMATO OPERA COMPANY**: "Un Ballo in Maschera." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. April 20 at 7:30 and April 21 at 2:30. Through May

12.)... **CONTINUUM**: Performing modern Japanese music. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. April 20 at 8.)... **ABSOLUTE ENSEMBLE**: In an all-Stravinsky program. (Weill Recital Hall. April 20 at 8:30.)... **MICHAEL TORKE**: Music by, and conversation with, the composer. (Merkin Concert Hall. April 20 at 9.)...

BACH ON THE ISLAND: With violinist Eric Grossman and harpsichordist Eleanor Bindman. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 1-718 885-2478. April 21 at noon.)... **VERISMO OPERA COMPANY**: Presenting Richard Owen's "The Death of the Virgin," on a double bill with "Cavalleria Rusticana." (Ethical Culture Society, 2 W. 64th St. April 21 at 3. For information about tickets, call 781-1920.)...

SALON SOIRÉES: Pianist Rina Dokshitsky performs Schumann's "Symphonic Etudes"; baritone Tal Freiberg sings arias by Handel and Beethoven. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. April 21 at 6 and 8. No tickets necessary.)... **CASSATT STRING QUARTET**: Playing works by Haydn, David Diamond, and Brahms. (Merkin Concert Hall. April 23 at 2.)



Anne Sofie von Otter, in her New York début recital, at Alice Tully Hall, and Renée Fleming, in Rossini's "Armida," with Opera Orchestra of New York.

about free tickets, which are required, call 769-7406.)

DREW MINTER—The countertenor performs songs and arias from seventeenth-century Italy, assisted by the six-member continuo group of the ARTEK early-music ensemble (which will also offer several instrumental works). (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. April 19-20 at 8. For information about tickets, call 873-0473.)

ANNE SOFIE VON OTTER—In a New York début recital that is long overdue, the distinguished mezzo-soprano and her longtime pianist, Bengt Forsberg, perform songs by Schubert, Strauss, and a passel of Scandinavian composers: Grieg, Sigurd von Koch, Wilhelm Stenhammar, and Wilhelm Peterson-Berger. (Alice Tully Hall. April 21 at 2.)

ITZHAK PERLMAN—The violinist plays sonatas by Beethoven, Brahms, and Ravel, assisted by his pianist daughter, Navah Perlman. (Whitman Hall, Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts, Brooklyn College. 1-718 951-4500. April 21 at 2.)

MAXIM VENGEROV—Performing violin sonatas by Mozart, Beethoven (the "Spring"), and Prokofiev (his Second), as well as ten preludes

ABOVE AND BEYOND

FAMILY AFFAIR—"At first, I could only do seconds at a time." Marguerite Michelle, of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus, is recalling the delicate process of learning to hang by her hair. "Then I started to go higher and higher. Then I started juggling at the same time." Apparently good hair runs in the family: she learned the act from her mother, who in turn picked it up from her own grandmother. The circus is rich in such family values: Dsholdshbek and Gulaiem Usenbekov, equestrian acrobats from Kyrgyzstan, stand in the wings to watch their twelve-year-old daughter, Aishan, shoot a flaming arrow into a bull's-eye with her toes while balancing in a handstand. And then there's Samson Power, who comes, as you might surmise, from a family of strongmen. "With my teeth," he says, "I lift people three hundred and fifty pounds. I pull nails with my teeth. I blow balloons with my nose." (Madison Square Garden. 465-6741. Through April 28.)

WOODSTOCK FOR WIENER DOGS—The Dachshund Friendship Club promotes interspecies harmony as man, woman, and dachshund gather in Washington Square Park to sing and bark the club's theme, "The Dachsong": "Most kinds of dogs seem to either / Have shapes or proportions all wrong / They're only one way or the other / But dachshunds are both short and long." (April 20 at noon—or the following day, in case of rain. For more information, call 475-5512.)

DANGEROUS LIASSONS—This week, Wordsworthian bloom returns to the New York Botanical Garden's Daffodil Hill and Liasson Narcissus Collection. The host of golden cultivars, which are due to peak soon, includes some old Romantic favorites (Kissproof, Intrigue, Barrett Browning, Burning Heart), some twentieth-century hybrids (Jethre, Rocky Horror, Autobahn), and at least one Jazz Age joke (the Louis Armstrong—it's got a big trumpet). (Bronx Park. 1-718 817-8700.)

PUNCH AND JUDAISM—The Small Wonder Puppet Theatre stages Jewish tales, with dozens of puppets. (Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. April 21 at 1:30. For tickets, call 423-3225.)

READINGS—April 17 at 7:30: Novelist and short-story writer Mary Gaitskill and poet David Lehman read from their work. (Bowery Bar, 4th St. at the Bowery. 799-1044.) ... ♣ April 17 at 8: Bob Holman, Tracie Morris, Cecil Taylor, and Nealy Cherkovski, among others, reminisce about Beat poet Bob Kaufman and read from his collection "Cranial Guitar." (Poetry Project, St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. Tickets at the door.) ...

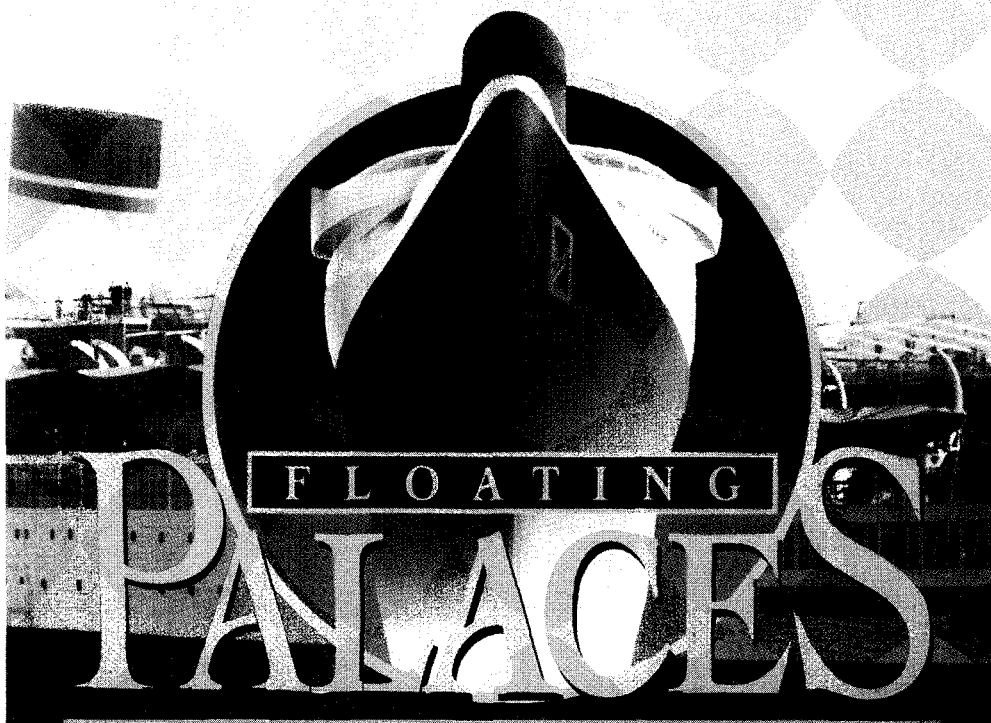
♣ April 19 at 6: After receiving the Poetry Society's Robert Frost Medal for lifetime achievement, Richard Wilbur reads from his work. (Celeste Bartos Forum, New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. For reservations, call 254-9628.) ... ♣ April 19 at 7:30: Mary Karr reads from her memoir, "The Liars' Club." (Barnes & Noble, Sixth Ave. at 22nd St. No tickets necessary.)

TALKS—April 17 at 4: Barnard history professor Lynette Jackson examines African female icons in a lecture on Saartjie Baartman, "the Hottentot Venus." (Barnard College, Broadway at 117th St. No tickets necessary.) ...

♣ April 18 at 6:30: Sociologist Philip Kasinitz compares Sunset Park, one of Brooklyn's immigrant hubs, with the more isolated Red Hook, in a consideration of the borough's shifting ethnicities. (Brooklyn Historical Society, 128 Pierrepont St. For more information, call 1-718 624-0890.) ... ♣ April 20 at 2: Financial cosmologist Tad Crawford leads a workshop exploring the mythology of debt and the transformative power of such ancient archetypes of credit history as Mercury, god of commerce and thieves. (Open Center, 83 Spring St. 219-2527.)

WALK—April 20 at 1:30: Location scout Arthur Marks rambles past the haunts of Village literati E. E. Cummings, Djuna Barnes, and Stephen Crane, among others, before sitting down for tea. For more information, call 254-1200.

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FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

AUGUST—A version of "Uncle Vanya" set in Wales, directed by and starring Anthony Hopkins. Opening April 19. (Eastside Playhouse and Quad Cinema.)

CELTIC PRIDE—Damon Wayans, Daniel Stern, and Dan Aykroyd star in a comedy about Boston basketball fans. Directed by Tom DeCerio. Written by Judd Apatow. Opening April 19. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Sutton, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy 1.)

FOR THE MOMENT—Writer-director Aaron Kim Johnston's story about an affair between a married woman (Christine Hirt) and an Australian pilot (Russell Crowe) in Canada during the Second World War. Opening April 19. (Cinema II.)

LOTTO LAND—A young Brooklyn man (Larry Gilliard, Jr.) spends his life's savings on lottery tickets, in a drama written and directed by John Rubino. With Wendell Holmes, Suzanne Costalos, and Barbara Gonzalez. Opening April 19. (Village East Cinemas and Embassy 4.)

MA SAISON PRÉFÉRÉE—André Téchiné's film stars Catherine Deneuve and Daniel Auteuil as estranged siblings who are reunited when their mother (Marthe Villalonga) falls ill. Written by the director. In French. Opening April 19. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

THE MONSTER—Roberto Benigni plays a con man mistaken for a serial killer, in a comedy he co-wrote (with Vincenzo Cerami) and directed. In Italian. Opening April 19. (68th St. Playhouse and Quad Cinema.)

MRS. WINTERBOURNE—Ricki Lake joins Shirley MacLaine in Richard Benjamin's comedy about a destitute young woman's misadventures with a wealthy family. Opening April 19. (Village Theatre VII, Gemini, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

MYSTERY SCIENCE THEATER 3000: THE MOVIE—A comedy based on the cable-TV series. Opening April 19. (Village Theatre VII and 84th Street Sixplex.)

THE SUBSTITUTE—A soldier of fortune (Tom Berenger) becomes a teacher in a gang-infested Miami high school, in a film directed by Robert Mandel. Opening April 19. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, Manhattan Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy 2.)

CURRENT FILMS

(The signed notes are by Bruce Diones, Anthony Lane, and Terrence Rafferty. If a movie has been reviewed in *The Current Cinema*, the date of its review is given. Theatre information is listed on page 25.)

THE BIRDCAGE—Mike Nichols's remake of "La Cage aux Folles" (1978) largely contents itself with decking out what appears to be a profoundly, unalterably French farce in American drag; the cautious, sensible approach taken by Nichols and his screenwriter, Elaine May, has the drawback of making this movie feel a little, as the French might say, de trop. Although Robin Williams and Nathan Lane, as the bickering middle-aged lovers originally played by Ugo Tognazzi and Michel Serrault, are skillful, the script doesn't give them much opportunity to distinguish themselves from their memorable predecessors. Oddly, the funniest performer here is Gene Hackman, playing an aggressively straight, family-values-spouting politician. Also with Dianne Wiest.—T.R. (3/18/96) (Village Theatre VII, 34th St. East, Baronet, Coronet, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, and Criterion Center.)

COLD FEVER—A comedy directed by Fridrik Thor Fridriksson, about the misadventures of a Japanese businessman (Masatoshi Nagase) in Iceland. With Lili Taylor and Fisher Stevens. Written by the director and Jim Stark. In English, Japanese, and Icelandic. (Angelika Film Center.)

DEAD MAN WALKING—Tim Robbins's blunt, powerful movie tells the story of a murderer (Sean Penn) awaiting execution and a nun

THE MOVIES



(Susan Sarandon) trying to save his soul—and, if possible, his skin. The filmmaker clearly hopes that familiarity with the grisly realities of capital punishment will finally breed contempt for the idea of premeditated, state-sponsored killing. And although the picture sometimes turns clunky and flat, as if it were sagging under the weight of its good intentions, it winds up being devastatingly effective. Penn has to reveal, within a reckless and apparently despicable character, a salvageable soul, and he makes the erratic rhythm of the condemned man's spiritual progress seem effortless and natural: he captures the languid, insinuating tempo of grace invading a locked-up spirit.—T.R. (1/8/96) (Village Theatre VII, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Olympia.)



Michel Serrault and Emmanuelle Béart in "Nelly and Monsieur Arnaud."

DIABOLIQUE—A glossy remake of Henri-Georges Clouzot's famous 1954 thriller, in which a man's wife and his mistress join forces to do him in. Here, Isabelle Adjani is the wide-eyed wife, Chazz Palminteri the piggy husband, and Sharon Stone the cool, worldly mistress. The director, Jeremiah Chechik, and the screenwriter, Don Roos, try desperately to add American spice to Clouzot's chilled French concoction; they throw in nudity, extra violence, Thelma-and-Louise feminism, and dog jokes, and wind up with something awful.—T.R. (4/1/96) (Village Theatre VII, Murray Hill Cinemas, 72nd Street East, Orpheum VII, 23rd St. West Triplex, Lincoln Square, and Criterion Center.)

EXECUTIVE DECISION—A tight, suspenseful film directed by Stuart Baird, who edited the

"Die Hard" and "Lethal Weapon" films. Although the plot, about terrorists aboard a passenger plane, is formulaic, the pace is swift and the shoot-outs carefully choreographed. Kurt Russell and a snazzy group of second-stringers (Oliver Platt, John Leguizamo) carry off a whispery surveillance routine that would make the crew at "Mission: Impossible" proud.—B.D. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, Gemini, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

A FAMILY THING—An Arkansas tractor salesman (Robert Duvall) discovers that his real mother was a black woman, and sets off for Chicago to find his black half brother (James Earl Jones). The men don't hit it off right away, but they are destined, of course, to transcend their mutual suspicion; the movie, taking everything slow and easy, manages to make their eventual rapport credible. Written by Billy Bob Thornton and Tom Epperson (who also collaborated on "One False Move"); directed by Richard Pearce ("The Long Walk Home").—T.R. (4/1/96) (19th Street East 6, Manhattan Twin, Orpheum VII, Regency, and Criterion Center.)

FARGO—Everybody in Joel and Ethan Coen's movie talks with painful slowness, as if the icy Minnesota air were freezing their chops; the resulting mood is lugubrious and oddly winning. The story, about a hopeless businessman (William H. Macy) who hires a couple of crooks (Peter Stormare and Steve Buscemi) to kidnap his wife, offers the usual Coen compound of random daftness and concentrated violence. Frances McDormand has a high old time as the police chief of the town of Brainerd; decent and unhurried (her character is seven months pregnant), she brings order to the weirdness and warms it up.—A.L. (3/25/96) (19th Street East 6, New York Twin, Art Greenwich Twin, and Lincoln Square.)

FEAR—The teen-age daughter (Reese Witherspoon) of a recently remarried architect (William Petersen) develops a crush on a smooth-talking thug (Mark Wahlberg), in a thriller directed by James Foley. (34th Street Showplace, First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, and 84th Street Sixplex.)

FLIRTING WITH DISASTER—David O. Russell's farcical road movie sets a thirtyish New Yorker (Ben Stiller), adopted as a small child, on a cross-country search for his biological parents, accompanied by his wife (Patricia Arquette) and an adoption-agency official (Téa Leoni). His quest for an identity turns into a tour of older-generation life styles which gives him a frightening glimpse of what it means to have a strong, invulnerable sense

TOM GULLO

of self. Russell turns this fairly witty conceit into a film of flat one-liners, dumb sight gags, and shockingly corny mixups. Despite some expert performances—by George Segal and Mary Tyler Moore as the adoptive parents (nervous urban kvetches), and Alan Alda and Lily Tomlin as the biological ones (devious ex-hippies)—the picture remains as confused as its hero; unlike him, it never does find its identity.—T.R. (4/15/96) (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Cinema I, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.... ♣ Cinema II and Embassy I; through April 18.... ♣ Embassy 3; starting April 19.)

THE FLOWER OF MY SECRET—Leo (Marisa Paredes), who is struggling through a wretched marriage, longs to be taken seriously as a novelist but has been churning out schlock romances for years, with horrible success, under a pseudonym. Her efforts to strip the dead wood from her life and discover what's left alive include flirting with a literary editor (the Chaucerian Juan Echanove) and making peace with her family. (Chus Lampreave and Rossy De Palma form a great pair as, respectively, Leo's mother and sister.) Pedro Almodóvar's script is, as usual, ripe to bursting, but his latest movie is gracious, affecting, and frenzy-free. In Spanish.—A.L. (3/25/96) (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER—Dan Aykroyd is an ethics professor whose next-door neighbor (Jack Lemmon) is a Nazi war criminal, in a black comedy written and directed by Harvey Miller. With Lily Tomlin and Bonnie Hunt. (19th Street East 6, Beekman, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Waverly, and Lincoln Square.)

JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH—Paul Terry is James in a part live-action, part stop-motion-animation adaptation of Roald Dahl's 1961 children's book, with voices by Joanna Lumley, Miriam Margolyes, Simon Callow, Susan Sarandon, and Richard Dreyfuss. Directed by Henry Selick. (Reviewed this week in *The Current Cinema*.) (Village Theatre VII, Sutton, 86th Street East Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, Guild, Lincoln Square, and Olympia.)

JANE EYRE—Franco Zeffirelli does Charlotte Brontë, with the assistance of Charlotte Gainsbourg, Fiona Shaw, and William Hurt. The screenplay is by the director and Hugh Whitmore. (Paris.)

KIDS IN THE HALL: BRAIN CANDY—A comedy by the Canadian performance troupe, about society's obsession with psychotropic drugs. Directed by Kelly Makin. Written by Bruce McCulloch, Kevin McDonald, Mark McKinney, Scott Thompson, and Norm Macdonald. (First & 62nd Cinemas, Waverly, and Lincoln Square.)

THE LAST SUPPER—Five left-leaning graduate students (Cameron Diaz, Annabeth Gish, Ron Eldard, Jonathan Penner, and Courtney Vance) embark on a killing spree after they accidentally murder a right-wing dinner guest (Bill Paxton), in a black comedy directed by Stacy Title. Written by Dan Rosen. With Jason Alexander and Ron Perlman. (Village East Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

LOADED—Seven friends spend a weekend at a country house making a horror film, in a drama written and directed by Anna Campion. (Angelika Film Center.)

NELLY AND MONSIEUR ARNAUD—Michel Serrault plays a retired magistrate who develops a relationship with a young divorcee (Emmanuelle Béart), in a drama directed by Claude Sautet. With Jean-Hughes Anglade. In French. (Reviewed this week in *The Current Cinema*.) (Quad Cinema and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

PRIMAL FEAR—After a couple of duds ("Final Analysis," "Intersection"), the spark returns to Richard Gere's acting in Gregory Hoblit's conventional but enjoyable courtroom drama. Gere plays an attorney defending a young man accused of killing the Archbishop of Chicago, and, although the story is full of tired characters (a prosecutor who's an old flame, a corrupt city developer), Hoblit's experience with actors in small roles (he has won Emmys for his work on "Hill Street Blues" and "NYPD

Blue") grounds the picture. Frances McDormand, Laura Linney, John Mahoney, and Andre Braugher are all so casually skillful that Gere's c'mon-you-know-you-want-me style has the room it needs to play. But it's Edward Norton, making his feature-film debut as the Boo Radley-like defendant, who steals the movie. It doesn't add up to much, unless you're surprised by the twists, but Hoblit has an economical style, and he gets the job done with very little fuss.—B.D. (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, New York Twin, East 85th Street, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Astor Plaza.)

SGT. BILKO—Hollywood's reheating of TV classics is feeling more and more like desperation; an update of the old "Phil Silvers Show" has to rank among America's Least Wanted. This new Jonathan Lynn "comedy" looks as if it had been written during a lunch break. The only point of interest is Steve Martin, who has wisely decided not to rerun the Silvers interpretation; on the other hand, he is far too manic for a soldier and not venal enough for a Bilko. The disgraceful plot involves a secret hovering tank and a plan to close the base where Bilko works. Sounds like a good idea. Co-starring Glenn Headly and a decidedly portly Dan Aykroyd.—A.L. (4/8/96) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and National Twin.)

A THIN LINE BETWEEN LOVE AND HATE—A comedy thriller directed by and starring Martin Lawrence, as a night-club promoter who seduces his dream girl (Lynn Whitfield). Written by the director and Bentley Kyle Evans, Kenny Buford, and Kim Bass. (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Gotham Cinema, 86th Street East Twin, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

WALLACE AND GROMIT: THE BEST OF AARDMAN ANIMATION—The British animator Nick Park just keeps racking up Academy Awards; last month he won his third for "A Close Shave," the highlight of this seventy-seven-minute retrospective of work from the British Aardman Animation studio—probably the most fun in town. The Aardman artists employ plasticine models in stop-motion; there is something deadpan, even mournful, in their bendiness, and Park's inspiration is to play that homely tone against the frenzy of his plots. This time, Gromit, the smart dog, and Wallace, his well-meaning, slightly slow owner, set out to catch a sheep rustler. Entwined with this plot is a love story in which Wallace finds a soul mate. And the finale includes a wonderful mockery of the "Terminator" pictures. Park's 1989 Oscar winner, "Creature Comforts," is also on the bill. Brief, bright, unpretentious, and graced with the kind of immaculate gags that we associate with the slapstick of the nineteen-twenties, Park's movies have a style that you can recognize within half a second; can any of today's other filmmakers claim as much?—A.L. (Film Forum; through April 23.)

ALSO PLAYING

ACROSS THE SEA OF TIME: Lincoln Square.... **ALL DOGS GO TO HEAVEN 2**: Village East Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, and Embassy 3.... **ANGELS & INSECTS** (reviewed in our issue of 1/29/96): Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.... **ANNE FRANK REMEMBERED**: Carnegie Hall Cinemas.... **ANTONIA'S LINE**: Angelika Film Center and Cinema 3.... **BABE** (9/4/95): Worldwide Cinemas.... **BRAVEHEART** (6/5/95): Gemini.... **CARRIED AWAY**: Village East Cinemas and Eastside Playhouse.... **CASINO** (12/4/95): National Twin.... **THE CELLULOID CLOSET**: Village East Cinemas and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.... **CHUNGKING EXPRESS**: Angelika Film Center.... **DENISE CALLS UP**: Quad Cinema and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.... **DON'T BE A MENACE TO SOUTH CENTRAL WHILE DRINKING YOUR JUICE IN THE HOOD**: Embassy 2.... **FAITHFUL**: Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Cinema 3rd Avenue, Orpheum VII, and Lincoln Square.... **FROM DUSK TO DAWN** (2/5/96): Embassy 2.... **GIRL 6**: Criterion Center.... **HAPPY GILMORE**: Worldwide Cinemas.... **HEAT**

(12/25/95-1/1/96): Worldwide Cinemas.... **IT'S MY PARTY**: Angelika Film Center.... **JUMANJI** (12/25/95-1/1/96): Worldwide Cinemas.... **THE JUROR** (2/12/96): Worldwide Cinemas.... **LAMERICA**: Film Forum.... **LEAVING LAS VEGAS** (11/6/95): Village East Cinemas, 59th Street East Cinema, and Lincoln Square.... **MIGHTY APHRODITE** (10/30/95): 68th St. Playhouse, Quad Cinema, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.... **OLIVER & COMPANY**: Village East Cinemas, Orpheum VII, 23rd St. West Triplex, and 84th Street Sixplex.... **THE POSTMAN**: Village East Cinemas, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.... **RESTORATION**: Manhattan Twin.... **RICHARD III** (1/22/96): Worldwide Cinemas.... **RUDE**: Criterion Center.... **RUMBLE IN THE BRONX**: Criterion Center.... **SENSE AND SENSIBILITY** (12/18/95): First & 62nd Cinemas.... **THE SILENCES OF THE PALACE**: Cinema Village.... **UP CLOSE & PERSONAL** (3/11/96): 62nd & Broadway and Embassy 4.... **THE YOUNG POISONER'S HANDBOOK**: Quad Cinema.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

(For show times, call 777-FILM, except where noted.)

EAST SIDE

ANGELIKA FILM CENTER, 18 W. Houston St.
VILLAGE THEATRE VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
CINEMA VILLAGE, 22 E. 12th St.
VILLAGE EAST CINEMAS, Second Ave. at 12th St.
19TH STREET EAST 6, Broadway at 19th St.
MURRAY HILL CINEMAS, 160 E. 34th St.
34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th St.
34TH ST. EAST, 241 E. 34th St.
EASTSIDE PLAYHOUSE, Third Ave. at 55th St.
SUTTON I AND 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
GOATHAM CINEMA, Third Ave. at 58th St.
MANHATTAN TWIN, Third Ave. at 59th St.
59TH STREET EAST CINEMA, 239 E. 59th St.
BARONET AND CORONET, Third Ave. at 59th St.
CINEMA I, CINEMA II, and CINEMA 3RD AVENUE, Third Ave. at 60th St.
FIRST & 62ND CINEMAS, 400 E. 62nd St.
GEMINI I AND 2, Second Ave. at 64th St.
BECKMAN, Second Ave. at 66th St.
NEW YORK TWIN, Second Ave. at 67th St.
68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, Third Ave. at 68th St.
72ND STREET EAST, Third Ave. at 71st St.
EAST 85TH STREET, First Ave. at 85th St.
PARK & 86TH STREET CINEMAS, 125 E. 86th St.
ORPHEUM VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
86TH STREET EAST TWIN, Third Ave. at 86th St.

WEST SIDE

FILM FORUM, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
WAVERLY I AND 2, Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th St.
CHELSEA CINEMAS, 260 W. 23rd St.
23RD ST. WEST TRIPLEX, 333 W. 23rd St.
GUILD, 33 W. 50th St.
WORLDWIDE CINEMAS, 50th St. between Eighth and Ninth Aves.
ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th St.
CARNEGIE HALL CINEMAS, Seventh Ave. between 56th and 57th Sts.
ANGELIKA 57, 225 W. 57th St.
PARIS, 4 W. 58th St.
CINEMA 3, 2 W. 59th St.
62ND & BROADWAY, 62 W. 62nd St.
LINCOLN PLAZA CINEMAS, Broadway at 63rd St. (757-2280).
REGENCY, Broadway at 67th St.
LINCOLN SQUARE, Broadway at 68th St.
84TH STREET SIXPLEX, Broadway at 84th St.
METRO CINEMA I AND 2, Broadway at 99th St.
OLYMPIA I AND II, Broadway at 107th St.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at Broadway.
CRITERION CENTER, Broadway at 44th St.
EMBASSY I, Broadway at 46th St.
EMBASSY 2, 3, and 4, Seventh Ave. at 47th St.
NATIONAL TWIN, Broadway at 44th St.

REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow. Theatre addresses and phone numbers appear with the listings following these notes.)

UN CARNET DE BAL (1937)—An episodic, star-studded film, directed by Julien Duvivier. A wealthy, nostalgic widow (Marie Bell) sets out to find the men listed on the dance program of her first ball, twenty years before, and manages to locate many of the most famous French actors of the day. People who saw this movie in their youth still talk about its big scene—the revelation of the discrepancy between what the widow remembered as her first great ball and the poor little provincial dance it actually was. And they tend to have the same kind of nostalgia toward “Un Carnet de Bal”—which despite its stars and its awards is a little tawdry, too. In French.—P.K. (Florence Gould Hall; April 23.)

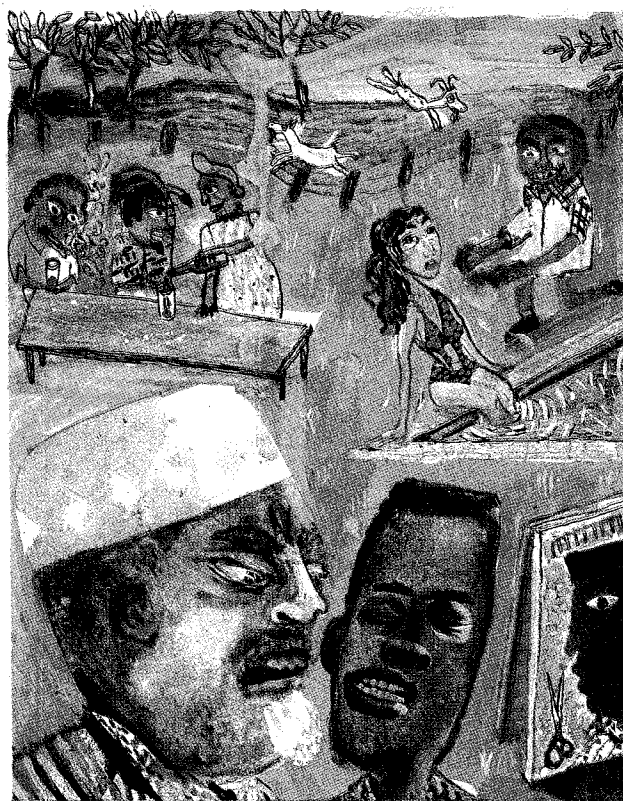
THE HAND THAT ROCKS THE CRADLE (1992)—Annabella Sciorra plays Claire, a devoted wife, mother, and, yes, botanist who blows the whistle on a lascivious gynecologist, catalyzing his suicide. Rebecca De Mornay is Peyton, the bad doctor's widow, who loses her own child and lies her way into Claire's nursery. And Ernie Hudson is the heroic, mentally challenged handyman who is wise with children: his name, of course, is Solomon. (Claire's husband, Michael, played by Matt McCoy, is a nonentity.) With its banal, docile household threatened by an enemy within, the film is like “The Stepfather” without wit or irony. Directed by Curtis Hanson.—M.S. (A Different Light Bookstore; April 21.)

A KING IN NEW YORK (1957)—Maybe the saddest (and worst) movie ever made by a celebrated artist. Chaplin mugs archly as King Shadhov, a deposed Ruritanian monarch who becomes a TV celebrity in New York. With Dawn Addams, Harry Green, and young Michael Chaplin, from whom his father coaxed a grotesque performance.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; April 19-20.)

THE TRIAL (1962)—Orson Welles's theatricality and bravado would seem to be especially unsuited to the matter-of-fact comic horror of the Kafka novel, but he manages some striking effects that aren't at all jarring. This little-seen film has effective passages; it's more than an honorable try, though the hollow sound (that is, of the English-language version) is sometimes off-putting.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; April 21-22.)

THE UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG (1964)—A restored print of Jacques Demy's stylized, unabashedly emotional story of lost love, in which all the dialogue is sung. Catherine Deneuve plays a restless provincial girl who rebels against her overprotective widowed mother (Anne Vernon) by stepping out with a handsome auto mechanic (Nino Castelnuovo). Now that the movie can be seen as Demy intended it to be seen (the restoration is from negatives the late director prudently saved), its reputation as a sentimental crowd-pleasing novelty item seems grossly unjust. As you watch Deneuve's alert, sensitive performance, it seems inconceivable that in the sixties she was often condescended to as merely an extraordinary camera object. It's as if both the movie and its star were being punished for the miraculous simplicity—the sheer obviousness—of their beauty. In French.—T.R. (4/15/96) (Film Forum 2.)

WILD RIVER (1960)—In this heroic attempt at social tragedy, a committed progressive—Tennessee Valley Authority agent Montgomery Clift—takes on a passionate traditionalist—rural matriarch Jo Van Fleet—who refuses to leave her island home to make way for a dam. The superb producer-director, Elia



At the Walter Reade Theatre, Drissa Touré's “Haramuya,” part of an African film festival.

Kazan, fills their conflict with atmosphere; Protestant hymns pierce the still country air. Yet, for all his hard-won mastery of wide-screen storytelling, the picture never generates enough electric power of its own. Paul Osborn's script alternates between Clift's clash with Van Fleet and his affair with her granddaughter, Lee Remick—but Clift has passed his prime as an intuitive leading man, so Remick has to carry their romantic scenes. Luckily, she's both ravishing and poignant. Based on two novels: William Bradford Huie's “Mud on the Stars” and Borden Deal's “Dunbar's Cove.” With Albert Salmi, Jay C. Flippen, Barbara Loden; Bruce Dern débuts in a bit part.—M.S. (Symphony Space; April 23.)

LATE RUNS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

FILM FORUM 2, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—“The Umbrellas of Cherbourg” (†).
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—April 18 at 2:30 and April 21 at 5: “Circus of Love” (1954, Kurt Neumann; in German). . . . April 18 at 3: “The Salt Mines” (1990, Susana Aikin and Carlos Aparicio). . . . April 18 at 6: “Orpheus” (1949, Jean Cocteau; in French), with Jean Marais, Maria Casarès, and François Périer. . . . April 18 at 6: “The Transformation” (1995, Aikin and Aparicio). . . . April 19 at 2:30 and April 20 at 5: Films by Maya Deren. . . . April 19 at 3: “Venus Fire” (1993, Victor Lopes; a Brazilian film, in Portuguese). . . . April 19 at 6: “Commissar” (1967, Alexander Askoldov; in Russian). . . . April 19 at 6 and April 21 at 2: Short animated films by Gene Deitch and Dusan Vukotic. . . . April 19 at 8 and April 20 at 2: “Typically British” (1995, Mike Dibb and Stephen Frears). . . . April 19 at 8:15 and April 20 at 2: “A King in New York” (†). . . . April 20 at 5 and April 21 at 5: “The Emperor's Nightingale” (1951, Jiri Trnka). . . . April 21 at 2 and April 22 at 6: “The Trial” (†). . . . April 22 at 2:30 and April 23 at 6: “The Last Laugh” (1924, F. W. Murnau; silent), with

Emil Jannings. . . . April 22 at 6:30: Films by Jennifer Reeves, who will be present. . . . April 23 at 2:30: “Little Vera” (1958, Vasily Pichul; in Russian). . . . April 23 at 3: Short films from Latin America by Jorge Furtado, Sandra Kogut, German Bobe, and Marcela Poch. . . . April 23 at 6: “Tahiti” (1991, Pablo Dotta; in Spanish).
WALTER READE THEATRE, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level (875-5600)—Recent films from Africa. April 17 at 2 and 6:15 and April 18 at 4 and 8:30: “The Battle of the Sacred Tree” (Wanjiru Kinyanjui; Kenya) and “A Taxi for Aouzou” (1994, Issa Serge Coelo; Chad). . . . April 17 at 4 and 8:30 and April 18 at 2 and 6:15: “Rwendo” (Farai Senzenzo; Zimbabwe), “Maral Tanie” (Mahamat Saleh Haroun; Chad), and “Gombèlè” (Issa Traore; Burkina Faso). . . . April 19 at 2 and 6:15 and April 20 at 8: “Totot” (Daniel Kamwa; Cameroon). . . . April 19 at 4 and 8:30, April 20 at 9:50, and April 21 at 7: “Haramuya” (Drissa Touré; Burkina Faso and France). . . . April 20 at 3:30: “Hold Up the Sun, Part 1” (Laurence Dworkin; South Africa). . . . April 20 at 6 and April 21 at 9: “Wariko, the Jackpot” (Kramo-Lanciné Fadika; Ivory Coast). . . . April 21 at 3:30 and April 23 at 2: “Hold Up the Sun, Part 2” (Dworkin; South Africa). . . . April 23 at 6:15: “Aduéfue, the Lords of the Street” (Sijiri Bakaba; Ivory Coast and France). . . . April 23 at 8:30: “Interferences” (Raymond Tiendre; Burkina Faso), “Head in the Clouds” (Jean-Marie Teno; Cameroon), and “The Voyage of Memory” (Ahmed Diop; Senegal). . . . ¶ Weekend showings for children. April 20-21 at 2: A program of African animated short films.

A DIFFERENT LIGHT BOOKSTORE, 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850)—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On April 21 at 7, the feature will be “The Hand That Rocks the Cradle” (†).

SYMPHONY SPACE, Broadway at 95th St. (864-5400)—April 23 at 7: “Wild River” (†). . . . April 23 at 9:15: “Rashomon” (1951, Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese).

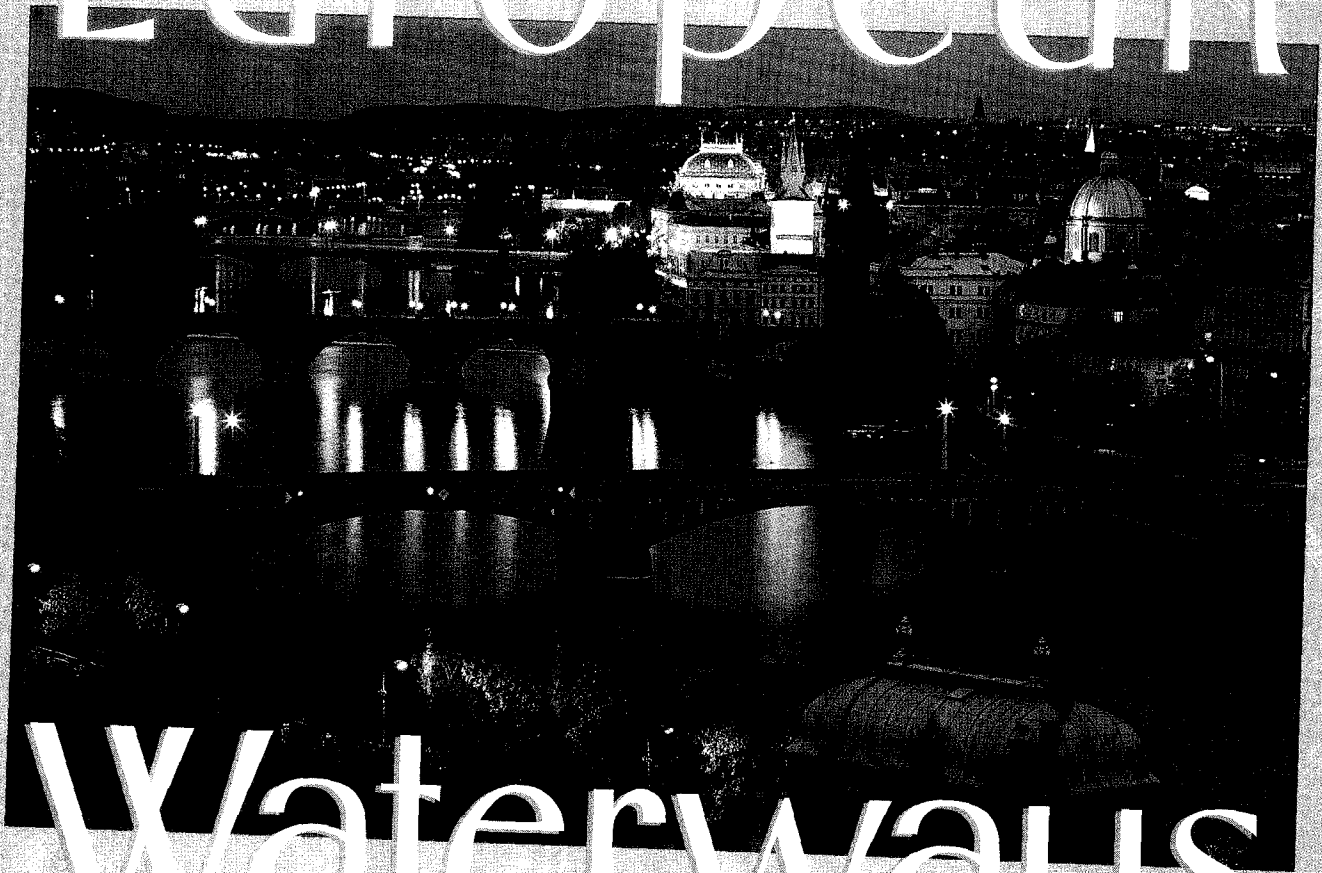
FRENCH INSTITUTE/ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—In **FLORENCE GOULD HALL**: April 23 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: “Un Carnet de Bal” (†). . . . ¶ In **TINKER AUDITORIUM**: A tribute to the Comédie-Française, its actors, and its authors. April 23 at 12:30 and 6: “Ondine” (1975, Raymond Rouleau; in French, with no English subtitles), with Isabelle Adjani. . . . April 23 at 3:30 and 9: “Le Dialogue des Carmélites” (1987, Pierre Cardinal; in French, with no English subtitles), with Nicole Courcel and Suzanne Flon.
AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (1-718 784-0077)—April 20-21 at 2 and 4: Two different programs of Tex Avery cartoons.

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway. (1-718 638-5000)—A program of Latin American films. April 19 at 7: “The Southern Cross” (1992, Patricio Guzman). . . . April 20-21 at 2: “The Girl in the Watermelon” (1994, Sergio Castilla).

NEW VICTORY THEATRE, 209 W. 42nd St. (239-6200)—April 17-18 at 7: “Sugar Cane Alley” (1983, Euzhan Paley; in French) and “Le Franc” (1994, Djibril Diop Mambety; Senegal). . . . April 19-20 at 7: “A Chinese Ghost Story” (1987, Ching Siu-Tung; in Chinese) and “Red Beard” (1965, Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune. . . . April 21 at 1: Short films by African-American, Asian-American, and Hispanic-American filmmakers.

ANGELIKA 57, 225 W. 57th St.—Through April 23, The 2nd Avignon/New York Film Festival '96, French and American independent films (including film tributes to Louis Malle and Henry Jaglom), seminars, and discussions. (For information, call 957-0951.)

European



Waterways

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Parliament Building along the Danube in Budapest

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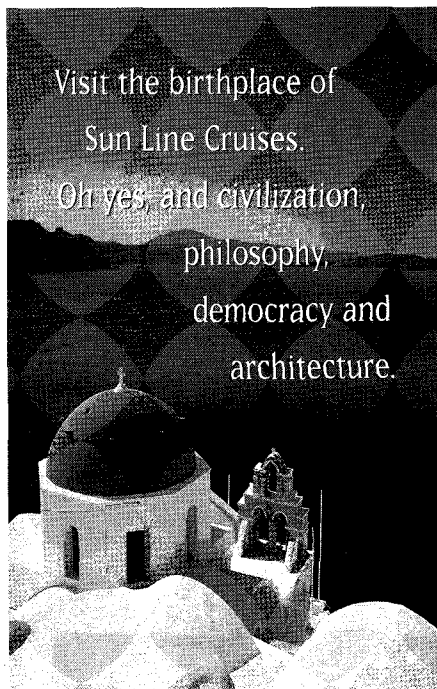
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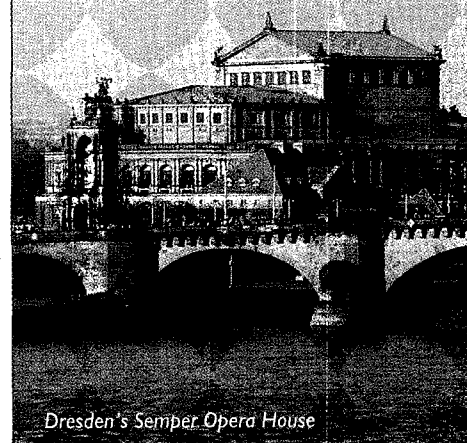
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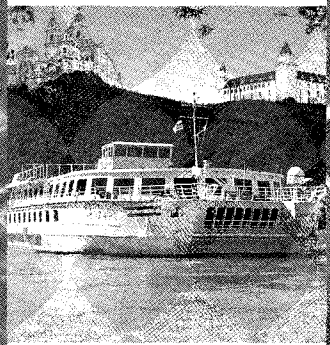
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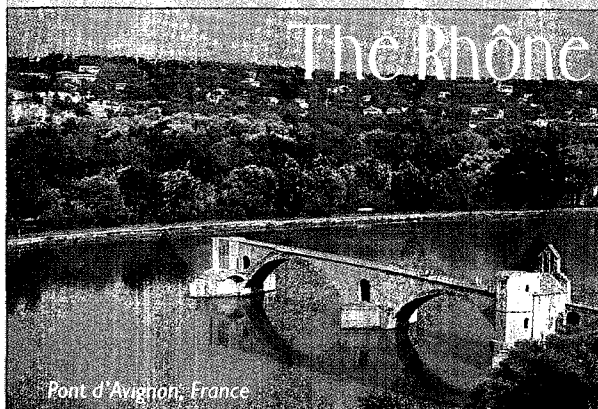
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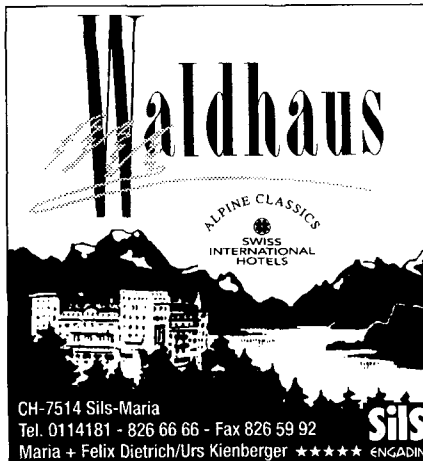
Avignon. The towering stone walls of this medieval city enclose the formidable Palais des Papes, which sheltered the papacy during its exile from Rome. This July and August the Festival of Avignon celebrates its 50th anniversary, with new productions of avant-garde works in theatre, dance, and music.

This summer is also a perfect time to follow the Rhône down to the Mediterranean and glorious Arles, famous for its soft, golden sunlight. The play of light and shadow will be on display in a different way this July, with the opening of Arles' International Gathering of Photographers, with exhibitions of works from around the world. Arles has often been called the "Little Rome of Gaul" for its many Roman ruins, and so it provides the perfect setting this August for the Peplum Film Festival, featuring films about the ancient world. The festival is being staged in cooperation with Twentieth Century Fox studios and will screen dozens of films—from the classic Biblical epics of Cecil B. DeMille to premieres from today's masters.

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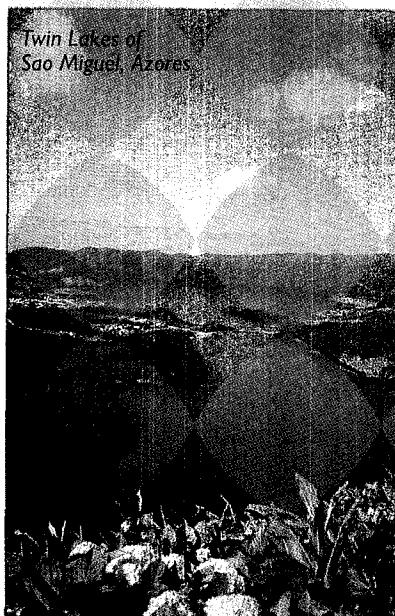
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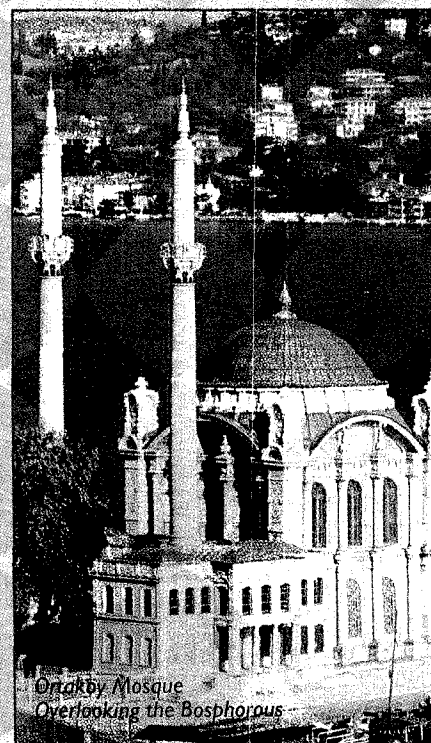
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Overlooking the Bosphorus

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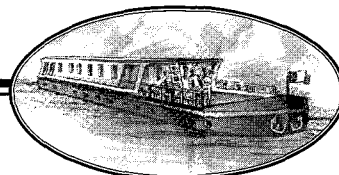
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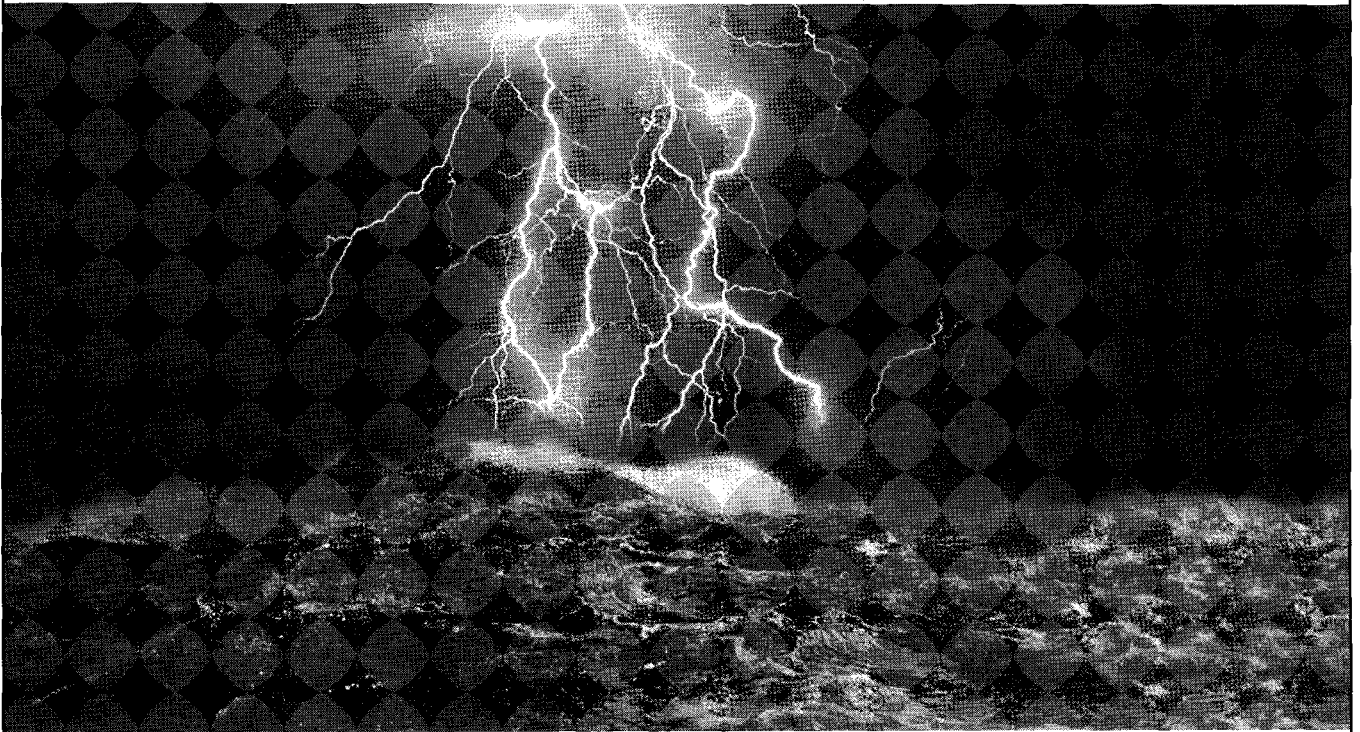
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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

THE SQUARE-PEG CANDIDATE

SAL ALBANESE, New York's newest mayoral candidate, knows the price of principle to an unusually precise degree. "Twelve to fifteen thousand dollars," he said the other day. Albanese, a City Councilman from Bay Ridge, has made a career of publicly defying Council Speaker Peter Vallone, a fellow-Democrat who runs the body with a whip in one hand and a hoop in the other. Vallone stripped Albanese of the chairmanship of a Council task force after Albanese criticized him in the *Times*, and he stripped him of a committee chairmanship (and its attendant income) after Albanese voted against an almost universally popular bill to put more cops on the street. (Albanese actually supported the idea of increasing the number of cops on the beat but thought that it should be done through productivity reform.) Vallone, says a Council official, regards Albanese as "a renegade, a maverick, and a troublemaker." The way Albanese puts it is "I raise the issues that no one else would have the guts to raise." You can hear a campaign slogan forming.

Although Albanese has almost no chance of gaining the nomination against better-known and better-financed candidates, he has a shot at becoming a disruptive force on the order of Pat Buchanan. Besides being a principled troublemaker, he's an eco-

nomic populist who is eager to soak the rich, or at least dampen them slightly. But Albanese's life story, unlike Buchanan's, gives him unquestionable working-class authenticity. His family emigrated from Calabria when he was eight. Like Mayor Giuliani, he is an Italian kid from Brooklyn, but he's not about to let anyone forget the class difference. "He went to a Catholic school, Bishop Loughlin," Albanese says. "I wanted to go to a Catholic school. My parents couldn't afford it." Albanese graduated from York College, a City University campus, and he takes Giuliani's recent attacks on the CUNY system as a sign of blindness conferred by social privilege. "Most of these kids are kids like me," says Albanese, a forty-six-year-old with something of Mario Cuomo's soulful brown eyes and craggy puss. "My father got sick, my mother was a garment worker. If it wasn't for CUNY, if it wasn't for his health benefits, if it wasn't for the wages she received, we couldn't have made it."

Albanese holds the quaint belief that New Yorkers will respond to the idea of the common good. He says it may be necessary to raise taxes not only on the rich but on middle-class homeowners, the city's most politically sacrosanct subgroup. "You cannot invest in the city without revenue," he says. "If you do it on a basis of shared sacrifice, people will come around to your way of thinking."

Albanese seems to specialize in improbable proposals. He wants to

require all future civil servants, including teachers and uniformed officers, to live in the city. But his most audacious idea is turning out to be his most popular. "When my mother worked for the minimum wage in the sixties," he says, "you could pay rent, you could put food on the table." Albanese proposes to rectify the workings of the labor market by legislation. He introduced a so-called "living wage" bill that would require all city contractors to pay workers twelve dollars an hour in salary and benefits, which is more than double what some of them now pay. City Hall has estimated that the bill could cost the city five hundred million dollars, though Albanese, with a fine disregard for the market, says that the contractors themselves would eat much of the extra cost. A bill that would result in somewhat lower hourly costs has now been introduced in the Council with Vallone's backing and could make it through with enough votes to survive a mayoral veto.

So far, Albanese has no endorsements and little money, though he does have an admirer or two. "He's more complicated than his detractors, and maybe even his supporters, would have you believe," Chris Meyer, a staff attorney for the New York Public Interest Research Group, says. Albanese favors gay rights and the death penalty; he has strong ties with the police despite his demands for reform; he has cast some conspicuously anti-environmental votes. He is a kind of forward-looking throwback, an outer-borough white Catholic who says "uncomfortable" but also says, "We should provide free incubator space to biotechnology firms." And he is a man who has nothing to lose—a strong position to be in, if you don't mind forgoing the income.



Sal Albanese

THEY'RE BAAACK!

NATURE confers a few impressive wonders that some, given the opportunity, wouldn't miss for the world. So on a balmy day back in February a phone call from the Staten Island *Advance* reporting that somebody had found the first cicada of the season was almost too much for Ed Johnson, the curator of science at the Staten Island Institute of Arts and Sciences. "There's really nothing quite like the cicadas," Johnson says. He is referring specifically to the *Magicicada septendecim*, or periodical cicada, a genus whose clockwork reemergence from underground every seventeen years is set for this May.

"It's a big deal to us because cicadas were responsible for the institute's being here in the first place," explains the bespectacled curator, whose salt-and-pepper hair is yanked back into a ponytail, and whose tufted whiskers and goatee give him a grizzled, Victorian air. Staten Island is a habitat epicenter for cicadas, and Johnson is surrounded by a sampling of more than sixty thousand of the prolific bugs, displayed in schmitt boxes in his gallery exhibit "The Cicadas Are Coming! The Cicadas Are Coming!" There is the Ecuadorian stop-and-go cicada, so called because of its red-and-green wing markings. And there is the tiny red-and-black cicada from China, thought to fight impotence, menstrual irregularities, and the evil eye. But it is the comparatively drab periodical cicada that is the star of the exhibit. Its lagging biological clock sets it apart from its annual cousins, a quirk that fascinates naturalists like Johnson.

The periodical cicada, which has the

longest life span of any insect, has a plump, inch-long black body framed by four cellophane wings whose bronze trim and filigree do nothing to flatter its bulging red eyes. A distinguishing "W" formed by a splay of veins in its outer forewings (which span about three inches) once gave the periodical a bad rep as a harbinger of war. Some people first notice the relentless, machinelike song of the males. Indeed, Henry David Thoreau, a Staten Islander during the 1843 emergence, observed that the cicadas could be heard by sailors offshore. This May's arrival is likely to strike modern ears with the force of a U.F.O. traffic jam. A veteran of two cicada emergences himself—in 1962 and 1979—Johnson predicts, "You may have some of them crashing into you, because they are kind of clumsy."

The insects' sheer numbers provide a survival technique that Johnson admires. "You'll have literally millions coming out all at the same time," he says. "The predators that are around eat their fill, but there are still millions left. So the chances of any one cicada being eaten are smaller. This insures that there are enough to carry on their species." Cicadas are virtually defenseless. They can't bite or sting; all they can do is struggle or attempt to fly away. Johnson says he's seen even house sparrows wrestle down the larger annual ones, a meal full of protein and

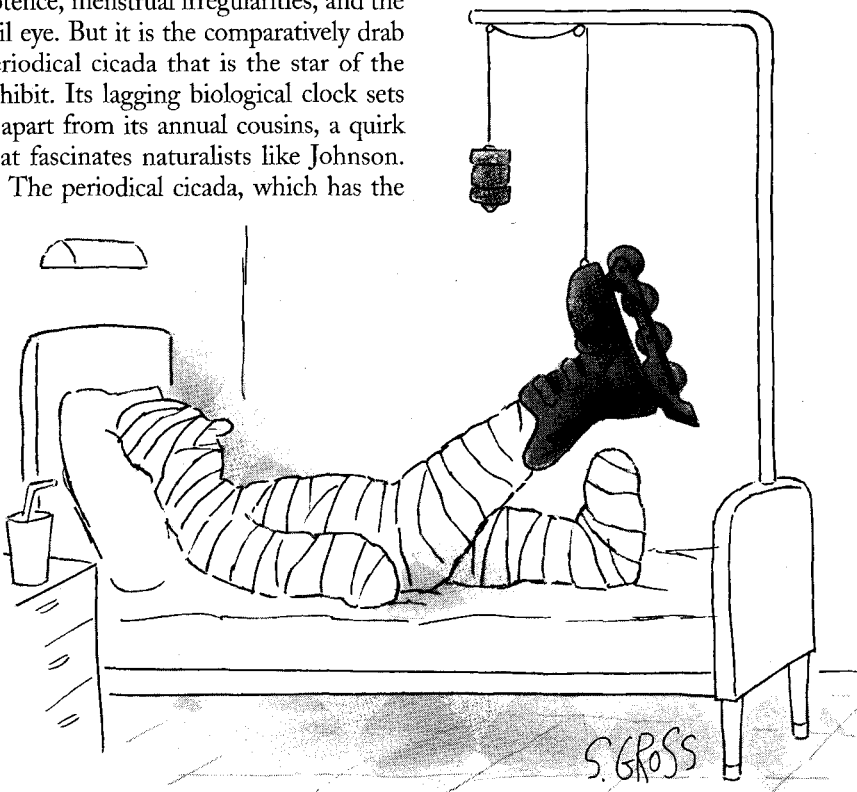
carbohydrates. He adds, "And it's all delivered in a nice little compact package."

Johnson is fond of noting, "When cicadas are abundant, everybody eats." Including people. The curator has a favorite recipe from a 1907 United States Department of Agriculture bulletin which he is eager to experiment with this year. "Most things taste good when they're battered and fried," he says hopefully.

SHE CAME FROM SOHO

THE forty-two-year-old New York-based artist Cindy Sherman, who has won any number of awards and honors for her photographs, tells lies. During her twenty-year career as a professional illusionist intent on recording the subtle and sometimes not so subtle transformations that she has undergone in her photographs—most of which depict Sherman in disguise—she has worked pretty much alone. Until now. "It's not really natural for me to work this way," she remarked one recent afternoon about her latest role: film director. Her first feature, tentatively titled "Office Killer," stars, among others, Carol Kane and the Fassbinder alumna Barbara Sukowa, and began shooting in Manhattan three weeks ago. As Sherman sat in her SoHo loft—a warm, large living space replete with mirrors—her all-American appearance (pale skin, bright-blue eyes, ready smile) and optimistic attitude seemed in keeping with the chirpy, all-American sound of her first name. Nevertheless, she said, "I'm anxious enough about directing this movie. It would make me more anxious if I was in it." But the star of this Cindy Sherman production is not Cindy Sherman. "The thing I would never like about being an actress is giving up my control to the director and the editors and the cameraperson. I hate collaboration," Sherman said, laughing. "This movie is kind of like a collaboration."

With her justly renowned "Untitled Film Stills" of the late seventies, the viewer was confronted by Sherman as she imagined herself to be: in grainy black-and-white B-movies with many subplots. One image from the series showed Sherman in a blond wig on a lonely road, her small, lonely back facing the camera. Another showed her emoting her character's distress through mascara-stained eyes. In all,



the images recorded a young woman's attempts to become someone other than herself—the “real” Cindy Sherman. But, according to Sherman, “I never had any theoretical whatever behind them.”

It was the dramatic surface of some of Sherman's recent photographs—in which she transforms herself into ghouls and gnomes crouched and leering in creepy landscapes—that prompted the producer Christine Vachon to ask her if she'd like to direct a horror movie. At first, Sherman was wary because of her former boyfriend Robert Longo's experience with “Johnny Mnemonic,” the disastrous multimillion-dollar cyber-epic. “But the money people wanted to do a series of horror films for an art-house crowd, so they were willing to be experimental,” Sherman said. “Office Killer,” written by Elise Mac Adam and Tom Kalin, is a horror film whose plot will be of particular interest to those for whom the incorrect use of a semicolon is an actionable offense; it concerns a magazine copy editor who reacts to a job change by becoming a serial killer. When asked about the film's prospects, Sherman shook her head and smiled a smile that offered another view of her changeling face. “The good thing about horror films,” she said, “is that nobody expects them to be any good.”

SEND IN THE CATERERS

“WE just didn't have time,” the singer Judy Collins says, offering an explanation for why she and Louis Nelson, an industrial designer, never got around to getting married in the nearly eighteen years they've been a couple. Collins and Nelson met on April 16, 1978, at a dinner supporting the Equal Rights Amendment, just before she entered treatment for alcoholism. “When I came back, we got together again and have been together, basically, ever since,” Collins says as they sit, both dressed in black, at opposite ends of a white couch in their Upper West Side living room. Their hair is the same sandy color, and both have blue eyes, though Collins's are paler and more famous. For many years, they discussed marriage, but it seemed superfluous. “There was always an emotional commitment and a spiritual commitment,” Collins says. “I always thought that should be plenty.” Now, however, it

has become important to formalize the bond, particularly after Collins's son committed suicide, in 1992, and Nelson's appendix ruptured, a year later.

The E.R.A. may be long forgotten, but Collins and Nelson will ratify their union at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine precisely eighteen years after their first meeting. They have asked guests to make donations to the cathedral, but some friends want to give them gifts, too. Collins shrugs. “I guess after eighteen years we could have been married twice—they're getting off easy.”

A TWISTED TALE



At a black-tie fund-raiser in Chicago for the Friends of Conservation not long ago, Jim Fowler, the famous wildlife educator and a former host of “Wild Kingdom,” was on hand (wearing a safari jacket in lieu of a tuxedo) to show off a few of his charges. He brought out a capuchin monkey, a leopard, a Florida cougar, and a fifteen-foot Burmese python—a rare albino specimen, patterned a pale yellow and white.

After the applause had died away, back at his table Fowler was asked if he ever had trouble with large snakes. He smiled and said that he was reminded of an experience he'd had a few years ago with an anaconda from South America—about eighteen feet long—that he was planning to take to Johnny Carson's “Tonight Show.”

“It was the night before, and there I was in my room on the fourteenth floor of the Sheraton Universal in Burbank with my more than two-hundred-pound anaconda. He was covered with cedar chips from his ride in the suitcase, so I undressed and got into the bathtub with him to wash him down. After I swabbed him dry, I went to the door to get the newspaper that I had noticed on my way in. I had the anaconda on my shoulders at the time, and rather than put him back in the tub I carried him into the other room. The way you handle a big snake is to keep the top end around your shoulders; the rest of it will entwine around your stomach.”

The guests nodded as if in concurrence: “Of course, of course.”

“I opened the door and reached down for the paper,” Fowler continued. “On my neck, the anaconda shifted his weight forward, extending his neck out about six feet as a sort of counterbalance, which threw me off balance and I half-stumbled out into the corridor.”

“Uh-oh.”

Fowler nodded. “I heard the door behind me click shut.”

Gasps went up, and somebody asked Fowler what he was wearing.

“Well, other than the anaconda,” he replied with a smile, “just about nothing—a pair of torn Jockey shorts, soaking wet, because I'd been in the bathtub.”

Fowler explained that he thought the elevator was his only chance—he could push the alarm button, or someone might come out who wouldn't panic and could get a bellhop. “I was on my way to the elevator, slumped as low to the floor as I could get and partially crouched next to the wall, when suddenly the elevator door opened. I heard this absolute barrage of giggles from the people in there, and out they came into the corridor—a girls' basketball team! It took a little time for it to sink in—that they were looking at a naked man dressed in a huge snake.

“I heard a couple of screams,” Fowler said. “Then they were gone. Vanished. And they weren't the only ones. A couple of times, I got close to the elevator and didn't make it, because people would come out and scream and run. Finally, one of the hotel guys came up, and I was able to get back in my room.”

Everyone leaned back. “Whew!” someone said.

Later, one of the guests said that he couldn't get Fowler's dilemma out of his mind. He kept thinking about the girls' basketball team. “What do you suppose those girls told their parents back in Fresno or Carson City or wherever?” he asked. “Do you think anyone believed them?”

“I doubt it” was the answer. “A naked man with a huge snake in the corridors of a luxury hotel in Burbank? I can just hear it: ‘Now, dearie, eat your cereal. You just had a bad dream.’” ♦

“The Square-Peg Candidate,” James Traub; “They're Baaack!,” Eric K. Washington; “She Came from SoHo,” Hilton Als; “Send in the Caterers,” Blake Eskin; “A Twisted Tale,” George Plimpton.

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LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

AFTER THE FIRST DATE

Ross Perot is dancing with some very unlikely partners.

BY MICHAEL KELLY

IF Ross Perot had a talent for self-reflection, which is a statement akin in its degree of improbability to "If my dog had a talent for systems analysis," he might have contemplated the events of March 25th—Oscar night. While inside the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, in downtown Los Angeles, everyone was having the usual Oscars fun—Whoopi Goldberg making flatulence jokes and Sharon Stone vamping and Jim Carrey doing gross-out tricks with his tongue—outside, and across town, the Reverend Jesse Jackson was leading a little protest in the dark. The ostensible point of picketing the offices of the ABC affiliate KABC-TV was to demonstrate outrage over the paucity of blacks among the Academy Award nominees. The real point, of course, was to demonstrate the Reverend's relevance—to show that he is still someone to whom attention must be paid. In this regard, the event was a crashing failure. It got Jackson a few days' worth of modest, bored press play, but that is all. Inside the pavilion, almost no one even bothered to pay lip service to him. When the question of Jackson's bid for a piece of the Oscar-night action did arise, it was as a joke: he won the derisive attention of Ms. Goldberg, the mistress of ceremonies, and, later, of Nathan Lane, a star of the movie "The Birdcage." Tellingly, Lane's crack was only implicitly aimed at Jackson. His direct target was Ross Perot: the actor declared that he had just seen Perot outside, yelling and demanding "to know why more nutty billionaires weren't nominated."

Twelve years ago, Jesse Jackson became the first African-American to make a serious run for the Presidential nomination of a major party. Jackson, sweeping the black vote, gained a solid third place in the Democratic primaries of 1984, behind Walter Mondale and Gary Hart. His performance earned him a prime-time speaking slot at the Democratic National Convention, and he obliged the Democrats to pay his travel and staff ex-

penses for the duration of the 1984 campaign season. By 1988, Jackson had replaced Senator Edward Kennedy as the unofficial spokesman for the left wing of the Democratic Party, and that year, when he made his second try for President, he won seven million Democratic-primary votes, coming in second to Michael Dukakis. I suspect that Jackson thought 1988 was a harbinger of greater things to come, but it turned out to be the high-water mark of his political significance. In 1989, when I spent several weeks following Jackson around the country, it was already clear that he was closer to being a celebrity—famous for being famous—than to being a wielder of real power. Jetting endlessly from cause to cause and camera to camera, he was sprinting toward his own vanishing point. By 1992, Jackson had lost so much power that the candidate Bill Clinton, in need of showing that he was no Dukakis, felt safe in challenging the Reverend to his face, criticizing the National Rainbow Coalition's support of the race-baiting rap artist Sister Souljah.

What Jesse Jackson has discovered, and what Ross Perot is going to learn, is that there is a natural boom-and-bust cycle to celebrity protest politics, and that this cycle is as inexorable as the boom-and-bust cycles of economics. Media-based protest politicians, like Jackson and Perot (and, for that matter, Pat Buchanan), tend to follow a path of fast up, fast down. The first time they run, they do surprisingly well. The second time, they may do even better, as Jackson did in 1988 and Buchanan has done this year. But the fall-off from there is almost invariably swift and steep. These candidates are the equivalent of first-date guys—attractive enough to take a flier on once, and twice at the most, but no more. Their inability to sustain their appeal compels them to seek out a new pool of first-date voters every time they run. These voters, as a rule, are to be found on the fringes of politics, since in most elections the party-

establishment candidates can be counted on to split the vast majority of votes in the center. Every time a celebrity protest candidate runs, he has to work harder—and go farther out on the fringe—to win support. The 1984 model Jesse Jackson had to garner only the mainstream black vote to win a place in history. To make a commensurate splash in 1988, he had to make inroads among white voters. But most of the white vote available to him lay with the obsessives of the left-wing fringe: the Earth Firsters, the ACT UPers, the gender/class/race radicals, and so on. Similarly, the Pat Buchanan of 1996, with his hot-eyed talk of New World Order conspiracies and his urgings to “lock and load,” is a lot more extreme than the Buchanan of 1992 was, and he is bound to go even farther out on the margin in years to come. There is an ineluctable circularity to the process: the more often a fringe candidate runs, the more fringe he becomes, and the more fringe he becomes, the more he attracts only fringe voters. It has a tendency to become, in the end, a matter of nuts to the nut.

But in the case of Ross Perot there are a number of complicating questions: What happens when a celebrity protest candidacy arises at a time when the conviction that the people's interests are not being served by either of the major parties is moving from the fringe to the mainstream of politics? What happens when the candidate is a billionaire? What happens when the candidate is nuts to begin with?

IN the Presidential election of 1992, Perot won nineteen per cent of the vote—the highest percentage captured by an independent or third-party candidate since Teddy Roosevelt, in 1912. Although Perot played well among people who claimed to have experienced close encounters with flying saucers (a 1994 Washington Post-ABC News poll found that fifty-nine per cent of those spacecraft sighters preferred Perot to Clinton or Dole), his

support seemed to come, for the most part, from rational voters: older, fairly well educated, white, middle- to upper-middle-class men and women who described themselves as profoundly disenchanted with the two-party system. They believed that the Democrats and the Republicans had become corruptly beholden to their financial backers and chronically incompetent to deal with the major problems threatening the nation.



Nuts to the nut: the billionaire's experiment in fusion politics is a good deal odder than is generally recognized.

Early in the 1992 campaign, there were signs that Perot was becoming—as he once described his press coverage that year—a “Froot Loop story.” Much of the evidence came via Perot's own persistent habit of self-exposure: the tale that the candidate told of Republican plotting to disrupt his daughter's wedding by threatening a release of a phony, naughty photograph, and the story of his belief that the Communist government of North Vietnam had once dispatched Black Panther assassins to murder him in his Dallas mansion. There were also the many accounts of the billionaire's

obsessive use of private security forces and private detectives; the record of the candidate's fondness for conspiracy theories of every stripe; and the Queeg-like ranting that became more apparent as the campaign season went on. Above all, there was the simple and increasingly conspicuous issue of inappropriateness. Nuttism is largely a matter of acting inappropriately. Biting the bishop's wife might be the correct thing to do in one set of circumstances—alone

and late at night, aflame with a doomed passion, in the conservatory—but the same act committed in, say, a receiving line at St. Paul's Cathedral is crazy. Perot, it became increasingly clear as the 1992 race drew to a close, had a hard time grasping this sort of distinction. He was given to sudden, sharp, disconnected exclamations (“It's just that simple!”, “End of story!”, “Here's the beauty part!”) that seemed as if they were meant to be spoken in some other setting, possibly in a parallel universe.

As 1992 ended, Perot, although damaged, was still strong enough to hold his supporters together in a national political entity, United We Stand America. United We Stand was not a party but, rather, like Jesse Jackson's National Rainbow Coalition, an ad-hocracy, a largely unstructured organization built around a personality. Still, it was a potentially important force. At its peak, in 1993 and 1994, the organization boasted (according to some of its top officials at the time)

more than a million members. And these supporters represented the leading edge of a key trend in American politics—the coalescing of what the Washington Post's David Broder has called the “radical middle,” former Democratic and Republican voters who had become so disillusioned with the parties that they saw no alternative to forming a new party.

By 1995, however, what Perot had started in 1992 was a shambles. The political activists and operatives who had organized the effort to put the Texan on the ballot as an independent in 1992, and had

built United We Stand, had, for the most part, deserted Perot and his movement. Howard Mann, a Dallas manufacturer who spent seven months working full time as a recruiter and videographer for the Perot organization, is one of many ex-supporters who have described how Perot's unstable, dictatorial behavior drove the rank and file out of United We Stand and how Perot systematically replaced those grassroots volunteers with paid apparatchiks. "He looks attractive until you smell his breath," Mann says. "We were all looking for somebody like a hero, and he was a hero, but only because we didn't know him better. Everybody is an enemy to him. He is very caustic, very cruel. People were afraid to do anything. The difference between him and crazy is about three billion dollars. I'd be afraid to see him as President of the United States."

Perot's defenders, including officials of his nascent political party, the Reform Party, argue that the people who were attracted to Perot in 1992 were idealistic amateurs, unwilling to accept the discipline of an organization and unable to cope with the stresses and disappointments that are inherent in politics. But even the political professionals whom Perot had hired soured on him, and they tend to give the same reasons for their disaffection that the amateurs give for theirs.

Robert Barkin, a Washington communications consultant who was part of a team of paid political advisers (headed by the Republican strategist Ed Rollins and the Democratic strategist Hamilton Jordan), describes Perot as capricious in his moods, totalitarian in his style, cruel in his pleasures. "Nobody had any power with him—not even his own family, not even his own son," Barkin says. But, above all, what disillusioned Barkin was what he came to regard as the candidate's intellectual fraudulence. "He wasn't about anything," Barkin said. "It's all ego. It's nothing else. There wasn't any there there. He didn't really want to focus on any of the issues."

In the end, the evidence that Perotism was turning out to be about not much besides Perot himself sent even the most desperate of fringe supporters packing: he lost the Liberty Lobby. This group, discreetly housed in a modest building on Capitol Hill, is one of the older voices of classical anti-Semitic conspiracy theory in American politics. Its enduring core belief, expressed in its newspaper, *The Spot-*

EARLY SEX

The one-celled creature brought to class
in the drop of pond water
took its main hunger around on the slide,

it had yes for a skin and a thousand
little hairs for feet
to help it decide. . . . You wanted to love the others

no matter what,
swam over the edge of yourself, swam
in the place that seemed like forever,

you loved when they visited you,
you changed shape for them, and when they left
you were the same as the water

—BRENDA HILLMAN

light, is that the United States and all the other sovereign nations of the world are imperilled by an international cabal of Communists, plutocrats, and financiers, who seek to establish a "Global Plantation." In 1992, the Liberty Lobby polled its Board of Policy members about their Presidential preferences, and reported overwhelming support for Perot.

Four years later, the Liberty Lobby has forsaken Perot and embraced the candidacy of Pat Buchanan, who is described in a recent front-page *Spotlight* editorial as possibly "the last political chance we have to save our nation from otherwise certain destruction." In January, the Liberty Lobby's Board of Policy voted overwhelmingly to endorse Buchanan. "The syndicated columnist won hands-down with better than ninety-five percent," the *Spotlight* reporter Michael Collins Piper wrote in a February 26th article. "This is no surprise considering the fact that Buchanan's presidential campaign platform reads like nothing less than a statement of Liberty Lobby's positions on the issues."

IN August of 1995, Ross Perot threw a convention for himself in Dallas. All told, about four thousand supporters attended, and so did much of the leadership of the Republican and Democratic parties. The ultimate purpose of the convention was to stage a show pushing Perot to start a new political party. A month later, Perot appeared (as usual, on the celebrity-worshipping sanctuary "Larry King Live")

to announce that he was forming a third party. Perot declined to say, however, whether he himself would serve as the Presidential nominee of that party. "This isn't about me," he insisted testily. But in fact there is little doubt that Perot will be the Reform Party's Presidential pick when the organization holds its first national convention late this summer. It is, after all, his party, and his checkbook.

But as Perot enters the 1996 race, he is already well along into the bust phase of the celebrity-protest-candidate cycle. A national voter survey, which was conducted late last month by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, found Perot to be the choice of sixteen per cent of the voters in a hypothetical contest against Clinton and Dole—a not very impressive result for a candidate who enjoys nearly total name recognition, who needs to raise not a single penny in order to make the run for President, and who is putting himself forward at a time of historic dissatisfaction with the established parties and their candidates. Even more significant, however, was the survey's analysis of who Perot's supporters are. In four years, Perot has lost nearly half of his first-date voters; only fifty-four per cent of those who voted for him in 1992 say they would do so again. His new supporters are younger, poorer, and less educated than those who voted for him the last time.

Having lost not only many of his mainstream voters but even his supporters on the extreme right (to Buchanan), Perot is now

in a dance with a new set of fringe groups—this time on the leftward edge of politics. The New Party, a small but serious-minded Wisconsin-based group dedicated to mainstreaming progressive politics and to advancing third parties, has discussed a tactical alliance with the Reform Party in the pursuit of legal challenges to ballot-restriction laws, according to the New Party chair, Joel Rogers. In Chicago, Randy Toler, the self-professed national director of Green Party USA, a tiny environmental splinter group that is locked in rivalry with the much larger Green Party of California, hints at backroom deals with unnamed Reform Party officials. And in the realm of the truly strange, the Reform Party has struck an alliance with Lenora Fulani, a Manhattan psychologist and two-time independent Presidential candidate, and her beyond-the-fringe New Alliance Party.

These dalliances and arrangements have almost nothing to do with ideology, and certainly do not represent any serious bonding between the left and Perot. Rather, they are based on the cold calculations of mutual need. Perot, facing the complicated and labor-intensive task of setting a third party in motion, requires the support of all the political field hands he can get. His new dance partners, for their part, see in Perot and his billions a windfall opportunity to advance not only their particular causes, but the cause of third-party politics in general.

By far the most bizarre of the new symbiotic relationships that Perot and his followers have entered into is with Lenora Fulani, who was the New Alliance Party's Presidential candidate in 1988 and 1992. Founded in 1979, the New Alliance Party has described itself as a black-led, women-led, multiracial, pro-gay, independent political organization. But according to critics, whose views were summed up by Chip Berlet in a 1987 report published by the left-leaning Political Research Associates, the New Alliance Party is really "an opportunistic political movement controlled by an unethical therapy cult whose white male guru"—Dr. Fred Newman, the self-styled founder of a new school of psychotherapy—"once led his followers into an affiliation with neo-Fascist cult leader Lyndon LaRouche." (LaRouche has denied this description.) The New Alliance Party has been accused of running, through a handful of affiliated psychotherapy clinics in the poor neighborhoods of several major cities, something that more closely resembles an exploitive cult than a political party. The New

Alliance Party has denied these accusations.

Fulani says that she became attracted to the idea of joining forces with Perot during the 1992 race. The following year, she met with Nicholas Sabatine III, a Reagan Democrat who was a leader of a group called Pennsylvanians for Perot, which evolved into the Patriot Party of Pennsylvania. In April, 1994, Sabatine and Fulani decided to merge; the New Alliance Party folded into the Patriot Party, which became the National Patriot Party, with Sabatine as the chairman and Fulani the chair of New York State. As is the case with all of Perot's new acquaintances, the two groups found theoretical common ground in their concerns about the corruption of politics and fiscal responsibility.

Shortly after Perot made his announcement on "Larry King Live," the Reform Party's national coordinator Russell Verney called Jim Mangia, a leader of the California Patriot Party, and asked for help in launching the first state drive to put the Reform Party on the ballot in California. According to Jacqueline Salit, a New Alliance Party founder, who is now a national executive committee member of the National Patriot Party, the party "converted" nearly all of the eight thousand Patriot Party members in California to the Reform Party, and also ran a voter-registration drive in poor urban areas and in gay communities around the state which netted four thousand new supporters. For the past several months, Fulani says, she has been "in constant contact with Russ Verney and, through him, with Perot on broadening the coalition." On April 5th, the Patriot Party of New York announced that National Patriot Party affiliates had joined forces with the Reform Party in a number of other states besides California (including Pennsylvania and Minnesota), and that the National Patriot Party would "participate in the nominating process of the Reform Party." For all practical purposes, a bizarre fringe party is now a subsidiary of Perot, Inc.

THE dealings between the Reform Party and these smaller groups illustrate the weakness of the first-date candidate. But they are also emblematic of



Perot's real significance. The Reform Party's efforts are important not because they will save Perot from the fate of Jacksonian irrelevance, but because they are reinvigorating (in diverse and sometimes odd ways) party politics in America. There used to be genuine alternatives to the Democrats and the Republicans. In the latter half of the last century, and in the first quarter of this one, groups like the Greenbacks, the Socialists, the Progressives, and, most significant, the Populist Party opened the electoral door to all sorts of minority and splinter interest groups. The small parties were able to exist because liberal election laws gave them easy access to the ballots and allowed candidates to affiliate with more than one party as "cross ballot" or "joint slate" candidates—thus permitting voters to cast a choice for both a minor party and a major party in the same person, and satisfying the desire to make ideological statements without wasting votes. But increasing restrictions in election laws since the end of the last century have made it extremely difficult for a new party to establish itself as a force. In recent years, only the Libertarian Party, on a minor scale, has succeeded in making its presence nationally felt, currently establishing lines on the ballot in thirty states.

Against this backdrop, the arrival of the Reform Party is a signal event. Russell Verney is predicting that this year the Reform Party will secure places on the ballots as a fully qualified party in thirty to thirty-five states, and will see its presidential ticket listed on every state's ballot. Independent experts like Richard Winger, the editor of *Ballot Access News*, say that forecast is on the money. That kind of strength is what has long been missing in the national political equation. The Reform Party's campaign is advancing not just Perot but the very concept of third parties.

The convergence of the overexcited ego of a Texas billionaire and the machinations of a bunch of people who don't even particularly care for him may turn out to be one of the more fascinating events in recent American politics. By the end of the year, the billionaire will be gone. Four years from now, he may well be doing the equivalent of Oscar-night picketing. But he may also leave behind a real legacy—a new consciousness that there is a way out of the two-party lock. In the end, Perot is right. His campaign really isn't about Ross Perot. That's the beauty part. ♦

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A CRITIC AT LARGE

BLAMING THE GERMANS

The much lauded revisionist study of the Holocaust goes too far.

BY CLIVE JAMES

THERE was a hair-raising catchphrase going around in Germany just before the Nazis came to power: *Besser ein Ende mit Schrecken als ein Schrecken ohne Ende*. Better an end with terror than terror without end. Along with Nazi sympathizers who had been backing Hitler's chances for years, ordinary citizens with no taste for ideological politics had reached the point of insecurity where they were ready to let the Nazis in. The Nazis had caused such havoc in the streets that it was thought that only they could put a stop to it. They did, but the order they restored was theirs. Its endless terror transformed not only Germany but the world, and continues to do so. Proof of that is Daniel Jonah Goldhagen's new book, "Hitler's Willing Executioners," provocatively subtitled "Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust." It has already been the subject of a controversial symposium at the National Holocaust Museum, in Washington; it has been hailed by the historian Stanley Hoffmann as "a truly revolutionary work" of "impeccable scholarship," and praised by Elie Wiesel, A. M. Rosenthal, and Robert Harris, among other critics. It is a book to be welcomed, but perhaps not as warmly as it has been. While much of the press in Britain and the United States has been unreserved in embracing a new approach to German guilt, a few dissenting voices—including some Holocaust experts at the symposium—have questioned whether the strategy of looking for enemies in a whole population has much to recommend it. Does pinning the Holocaust on what amounts to a German "national character" make sense? I don't think it does, and in light of Goldhagen's powerful book, it becomes a matter of urgency to say why.

Goldhagen has tunnelled deep into hitherto only loosely disturbed archives, and has surfaced with persuasive evidence that the Holocaust, far from being the work of cold-blooded technocrats organizing mass disappearance on an industrial basis (as we have been encouraged to think), was the enthusiastically pursued contact

sport of otherwise ordinary citizens, who, drawn from all walks of life, were united in their unflagging dedication to the infliction of suffering on powerless victims. In a constellation of more than ten thousand camps, the typical camp was not an impersonally efficient death factory; it was a torture garden, with its administrative personnel indulging themselves in a holiday packaged by Hieronymus Bosch. Our imaginations, steeped in the post-Hannah Arendt vision of the Holocaust, are haunted by the wrong figure: for every owl-eyed pen pusher clinically shuffling the paperwork of oblivion, there were, Goldhagen tells us, whole gangs of noisy louts reveling in the bloodbath. The gas chambers, our enduring shared symbol of the catastrophe, were in fact anomalous: most of those annihilated did not die suddenly and surprised after being deceived but died after protracted humiliations and torments devised by their persecutors with inexhaustible creative zeal. The book concludes, in short, that there is no point in making a mystery of how a few Germans were talked into participating in the Holocaust when there were so many of them who could scarcely be talked out of it.

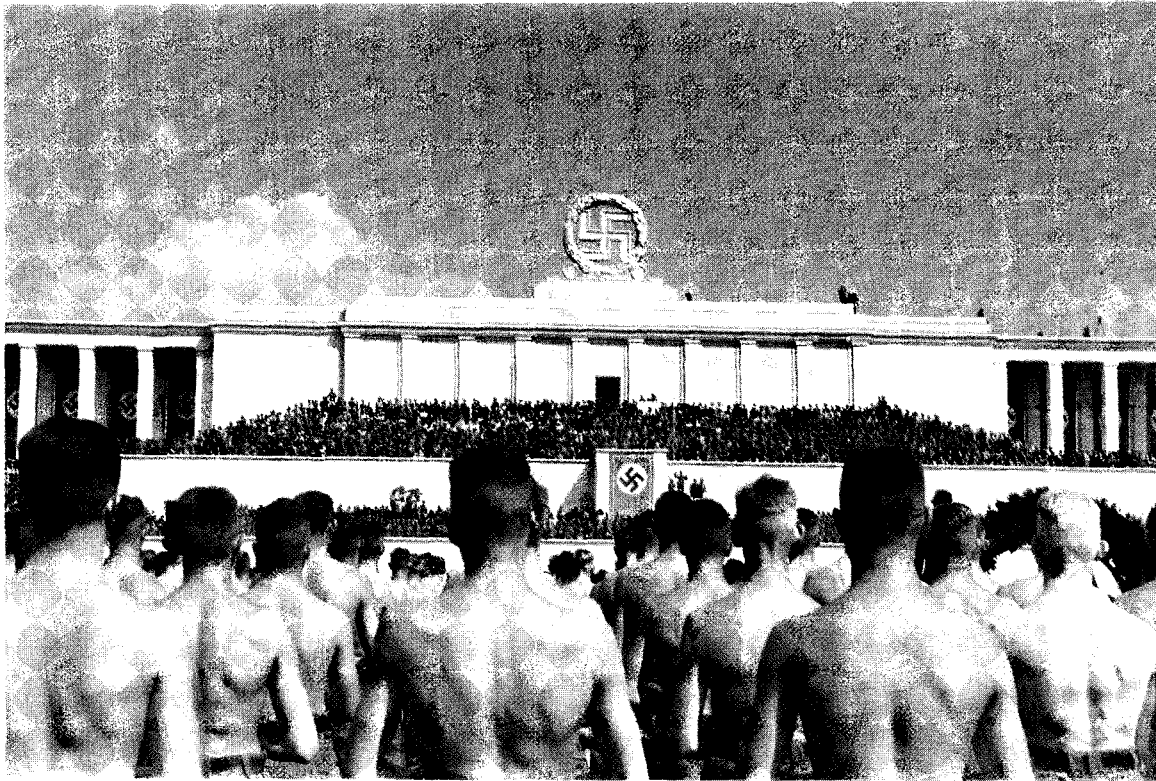
Unfortunately, Goldhagen reaches this conclusion with a retributive impetus that carries him beyond his proper objective. It would have been enough to prove that murderous anti-Semitism was far more widespread among the German people than it has suited their heirs, or the rest of us, to believe. But he wants to blame the whole population, and not just for prejudice but for its participation, actual or potential, in mass murder, fuelled by what he calls "eliminationist anti-Semitism." While he is ready to concede that there were exceptions, he thinks that they don't count—that we should stop fooling ourselves by holding the Nazis responsible for the slaughter, and simply call the perpetrators "the Germans." Didn't we, he asks, call the soldiers who fought in Vietnam "Americans"?

Well, yes—but we didn't blame "the Americans" for the atrocities committed

there, or, if we did, we knew that we were talking shorthand, and that the reality was more complicated. No doubt many of the soldiers involved had a ready-to-go prejudice against the Vietnamese, but without the ill-judged, and even criminal, initiatives of their government it would have remained a prejudice. What needed examining was not simply the soldiers' contempt for alien life forms but the government policies that had put the troops in a

one who ever thought that the men in black did all the dirty work think again. The first is that the mobile police battalions who conducted so many of the mass shootings in the East were taken from run-of-the-pavement *Ordnungspolizei* (Order Police), and many of them were not even Nazi Party members—just ordinary Joes who had been drafted into the police because they didn't meet the physical requirements for the Army, let alone

train to share in their activities. The few who did request to be relieved of their duties were granted a dispensation without penalty, and Goldhagen draws the fair inference that all who stayed on the job were, in effect, volunteers. Very few of the innocent people they killed were spared the vilest imaginable preliminary tortures. The standard practice was to assemble the victims in the town center, keep them there for a long time, terrorize them with



Nuremberg, 1937. Why, Goldhagen asks, did the German people not rise up against the Nazis? The answer is obvious: because you had to be a hero to do so.

position that allowed their contempt to express itself as mass murder.

The Nazis didn't just allow a lethal expression of vengeful fantasy; they rewarded it. They deprived a readily identifiable minority of German citizens of their citizenship, declared open season on them, honored anyone who attacked them, punished anyone who helped them, and educated a generation to believe that its long-harbored family prejudices had the status of a sacred mission. To puzzle over the extent of the cruelty that was thus unleashed is essentially naive. To marvel at it, however, is inevitable, and pity help us if we ever become blasé about the diabolical landscape whose contours Goldhagen redraws.

From the archives he brings back three main narrative strands that will make any-

the S.S. élite formations. So far, we have tended to put most of the mass shootings down to the *Einsatzgruppen*, the outfits detailed by Himmler specifically for the task of biological extermination. Goldhagen is right to insist that this common misapprehension badly needs to be modified. (The *Einsatzgruppen* themselves were a fairly motley crew, as Gitta Sereny, in her recent biography of Albert Speer, pointed out while pursuing the subject of how one of the best-informed men in Germany managed to maintain his vaunted ignorance for so long—if, indeed, he did.) The leaders of the *Einsatzgruppen* reported many instances of nervous breakdown and alcoholism in their ranks, but the police, by Goldhagen's account, seem to have thrived on torturing people, and sometimes even brought their wives along by

beatings and arbitrarily selective individual deaths, and then flog them all the way to the disposal site, where they often had to dig their own pit before being shot into it. In some instances, children were shot in front of their desperate mothers before the mothers were granted the release of a bullet. The inhumanity knew no limits, but it apparently didn't put off new recruits.

The willful cruelty of these atrocities has in fact been emphasized before, in, for example, Martin Gilbert's "The Holocaust," which is nowhere referred to in Goldhagen's book, though it presages many of his findings. And the complicity of minor players was previously established in Christopher Browning's 1992 account of the activities of Reserve Battalion 101, "Ordinary Men." (For a work as important as Goldhagen's, the absence of a bib-

liography is a bizarre publishing development. What next—an index on request?) Still, Goldhagen's firmly backed-up conclusion that many of the perpetrators were not newfangled Nazi ideologues but garden-variety German citizens of a traditional anti-Semitic stamp is a genuine contribution. Whether it leads to a genuine historical insight is the question that lingers.

THE second main story in Goldhagen's book is about the "work" that the Jews who were not granted the mercy of a comparatively quick death were forced to do. Goldhagen puts quotes around the word "work" because real work produces something, whereas "work" produced little except death in agony. Non-Jewish slave laborers from the occupied countries all suffered varying degrees of deprivation, but at least they had some chance of survival. The Jewish slaves had next to none. Here is further confirmation that the Nazi policy on the exploitation of Jewish labor was too irrational even to be ruthless. A ruthless policy would have employed the Jews for their talents and qualifications, concentrated their tasks on the war effort, and killed them afterward. But the Nazis starved and tortured them up to and including the point of death even in those few cases where the job they had been assigned might have helped win the war. A typical scenario involved lifting something heavy (a big rock or a bag of cement), carrying it somewhere else, putting it down, and carrying back something just as heavy, with beatings all the way if you dropped it. Referring to the perennial strain of German anti-Semitism which held that Jews were parasites and had never done any labor, Goldhagen argues persuasively that such punishments were meant to remind them of this supposed fact before they died. His book is most valuable here, where he traces the self-defeating irrationality on the Nazis' part to an ideal—perhaps their only ideal. At all costs, even at the cost of their losing the war, they pursued this task of massacring people who not only had done them no harm but might have done them some good—in short, of wasting them.

Many of the top Nazis were opportunists. In the end, Göring would probably have forgotten all about the Jews if he could have done a deal to save his skin; Himmler did try to do a deal on that very

basis; and Goebbels, though he was a raging anti-Semite until the end, seems to have taken up anti-Semitism in part with an eye to the main chance. He got into it the way Himmler and Göring were ready to get out of it, because even his fanaticism was a power play.

But for Hitler none of this was so. The sincerity of his insane ideal was proved by how he allowed it to act against his own interests. His belief that Jews had never done anything useful for Germany and never could was bound to result in his eventual military defeat, even if he had conquered all Europe and Britain, too, because in the long run he would have come up against the atomic bomb, developed in America by the very scientists he had driven out of Europe. On the vital part played in German science by Jews he could never listen to reason. In 1933, Max Planck protested what the new exclusion laws would do to the universities. In view of his great prestige, he was granted an audience with the Führer, but he hardly got a chance to open his mouth. Hitler regaled him with a lecture about mathematics, which Planck later called one of the stupidest things he had ever heard. The expiation that the Jews owed Germany for their pure uselessness was at the center of Hitler's purposes until the last hour, as it was for all who shared his lethal convictions.

This bleak truth is brought out sharply by the third and main strand in Goldhagen's book, which deals with the death marches in the closing stage of the war, when the camps in the East were threatened with being overrun. The war was all but lost, yet the Nazis went on diverting scarce resources into tormenting helpless civilians. The survivors were already starving when they set out from the Eastern camps, and as they were herded on foot toward camps in the Third Reich their guards, who might conceivably have gained credit after the imminent capitulation by behaving mercifully, behaved worse than ever. They starved their charges until they could hardly walk and then tortured them for not walking faster. This behavior seems beyond comprehension, and, indeed, it is—but it does make a horrible sort of sense if we accept that for the Nazis the war against the Jews was the one that really mattered.

Goldhagen's account of the death marches perhaps gives too much weight

to the fact that these horrors continued even after Himmler issued instructions that the Jews should be kept alive. ("Perhaps it's time," he famously said to a Jewish representative in 1945, "for us Germans and you Jews to bury the hatchet.") Goldhagen doesn't consider that the guards, both men and women, were facing a return to powerlessness and were thus unlikely to relinquish their shred of omnipotence while they still had it. He prefers to contend that the killings went on because the people in general were in the grip of a force more powerful than Nazi orders: eliminationist anti-Semitism. To him, nothing but a theory in the perpetrator's mind—in this case, the Germans' view that the Jews were subhuman and thus beyond compassion—can explain gratuitous cruelty. But recent history has shown that people can become addicted to torturing their fellow human beings while feeling no sense of racial superiority to them, or even while feeling that no particular purpose is being served by the torture. In some of the Latin-American dictatorships, torturers who had quickly extracted all the relevant information often went on with the treatment, simply to see what the victim could be reduced to, especially if the victim was a woman. To construct a political theory that explains such behavior is tempting, but finally you are faced with the possibility that, however deeply buried, such nefarious capacities are within all of us. (This used to be called Original Sin.)

The price for holding to the conviction about the all-pervasiveness of murderous anti-Semitism among the Germans is the obligation to account for every instance of those who showed mercy. In his discussion of Kristallnacht, Goldhagen quotes a Gestapo report (obviously composed by a factotum not yet fully in synch with the Führer's vision) as saying that by far the greater part of the German population "does not understand the senseless individual acts of violence and terror." Why shouldn't the people have understood, if their anti-Semitism was as eliminationist as Goldhagen says it was? Later, talking about one of Police Battalion 309's operations in Bialystok, he mentions a "German army officer appalled by the licentious killing of unarmed civilians," and he dismisses a conscience-stricken Major Trapp, who, having been ordered to carry out a mass killing, was heard to exclaim, "My God! Why must I do this?" Were



these men eliminationist anti-Semites, too? We could afford to consider their cases without any danger of lapsing into the by now discredited notion that the Wehrmacht was not implicated. Finally, during a reflection on the Helmbrechts death march, Goldhagen mentions that some of the guards behaved with a touch of humanity. He doesn't make enough of his own observation that they were the older guards—"Germans . . . old enough to have been bred not only on Nazi culture."

For Goldhagen, prejudice is the sole enemy. Other scholars, such as Raul Hilberg, the author of "Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders," have tried to show how Germans overcame their inhibitions to kill Jews. Goldhagen's monolithic thesis is that there were no inhibitions in the first place. But we need to make a distinction between Germany's undeniably noxious anti-Semitic inheritance—an age-old dream of purity, prurient as all such dreams—and the way the Nazi government, using every means of bribery, propaganda, social pressure, and violent coercion in its power, turned that dream into a living nightmare. Goldhagen slides past the point, and the result is an injury to the otherwise considerable worth of his book. He could, in fact, have gone further in establishing how early the Final Solution got rolling. Gilbert does a better job of showing that it was, in effect, under way after the invasion of Poland, where thousands of Jews were murdered and the rest herded into the ghettos. Goldhagen quotes some of Heydrich's September 21, 1939, order about forming the ghettos but omits the most revealing clause, in which Heydrich ordered that the ghettos be established near railheads. That can have meant only one thing. In May of 1941, Göring sent a memo from the Central Office of Emigration in Berlin ordering that no more Jews be allowed to leave the occupied territories. That, too, can have meant only one thing. Hannah Arendt was not wrong when she said about Nazi Germany in its early stages that only a madman could guess what would happen next. In 1936, Heinrich Mann (Thomas's older brother) published an essay predicting the whole thing, simply on the basis of the Nuremberg laws and what had already happened in the first concentration camps. But his was a very rare case, perhaps made possible by artistic insight. It needed sympathy with the Devil to take the Nazis at their word; good people



"The big guy wants to buy you a drink."

rarely know that much about evil. But well in advance of the Holocaust's official starting date there were plenty of bad people who didn't need to be told about mass extermination before they got the picture.

Here Goldhagen, in his unquenchable ire, provides a useful corrective to those commentators who persist in extending the benefit of the doubt to opportunists like Albert Speer. Gitta Sereny's book is a masterpiece of wide-ranging sympathy, but she veers too near naïveté when she worries at the non-subject of when Speer knew about what his terrible friends had in mind and whether he had actually read "Mein Kampf." In 1936, a popular album about Hitler carried an article under Speer's name which quoted "Mein Kampf" by the chunk: of course Speer had read it, and of course he knew about the Final Solution from the hour it got under way. The top Nazis didn't conceal these things from one another. They did, however, conceal these things from the German people. Why was that? There is something to Goldhagen's contention that the people found out anyway—that eventually everyone knew at least something. But why, if they were so receptive to the idea, weren't the people immediately told everything? Surely the answer is that Hitler shared the Gestapo's suspicion about the ability of the people to think "correctly" on the subject.

He certainly had his doubts before he came to power. In the election of 1930, which won the Nazis their entrée into the political system, the Jewish issue was downplayed. And later, when the Third Reich began its expansion into other countries, in all too many cases a significant part of the local populations could be relied on to do the very thing that Goldhagen accuses the Germans of—to start translating their anti-Semitism into a roundup the moment the whistle blew. In the Baltic countries, Ukraine, Romania, and Yugoslavia, the results were horrendous from the outset. A more civilized-sounding but even more sinister case was France, where the Vichy regime exceeded the S.S.'s requirements for lists of Jewish men, and handed over lists of women and children as well—the preliminary to the mass deportations from Drancy, which proceeded with no opposition to speak of. Why weren't the Germans themselves seen by the Nazis as being thoroughly bidable from the start?

Goldhagen leaves the question untouched because he has no answer. He is so certain of the entire German population's active collaboration—or, at the very least, its approving compliance—in the Holocaust that he underplays the Nazi state's powers of coercion through violence, something that no previous authority on the subject has managed to do. He



*"You used to have a funny little laugh, Marshall.
What happened to your funny little laugh?"*

overemphasizes the idea that the German people weren't completely powerless to shape Nazi policies; he cites, for example, the widespread public condemnation of the policy that resulted in the euthanizing of physically and mentally handicapped Germans. The practice was stopped, but in that case people were protesting the treatment of their own loved ones, and the Jews were not their loved ones. There could easily have been more protests on behalf of the Jews if the penalty for protesting had not been severe and well known.

Goldhagen qualifies the bravery of the Protestant minister and Nazi opponent Martin Niemöller by pointing out—correctly, alas—that he was an anti-Semite. But he doesn't mention the case of a Swabian pastor who after Kristallnacht told his congregation that the Nazi assault on the Jews would bring divine punishment. The Nazis beat him to a pulp, threw him onto the roof of a shed, smashed up his vicarage, and sent him to prison. And what about the Catholic priest Bernhard Lichtenberg, who, after the burning of the synagogues, closed each of his evening services with a prayer for the Jews? When he protested the deportations, he was put on a train himself—to

Dachau. These men were made examples of to discourage others. They were made to pay for their crime.

Because it *was* a crime—the biggest one a non-Jewish German could commit. Early on, some non-Jewish German wives managed to secure the release of their Jewish husbands from concentration camps, but that scarcely proves that a mass protest would have been successful, or even, in the long run, tolerated without reprisal. The penalties for helping Jews got worse in direct proportion to the sanctions imposed against them, and everyone knew what the supreme penalty was: forms of capital punishment under the Nazis included the axe and the guillotine. Both the Protestant and the Catholic Church knuckled under to the Nazis with a suspicious alacrity in which rampant anti-Semitism was undoubtedly a factor, but the general failure of rank-and-file priests and ministers to bear individual witness has to be put down at least partly to the risks they would have run if they had done so. (Later on, when the Germans occupied Italy after the Badoglio government signed an armistice with the Allies, and the extreme anti-Jewish measures that Mussolini had stopped short of were put into effect, the roundup was a

comparative failure, partly because the priests and nuns behaved so well. But they had not spent years with the threat of the concentration camp and the axe hanging over them.) In Germany, everyone knew that hiding or helping Jews was an unpardonable crime, which would be punished as severely as an attack on Hitler's life—because it *was* an attack on Hitler's life. Why, Goldhagen asks, did the population not rise up? The answer is obvious: because you had to be a hero to do so.

EVENTUALLY, of course, a small but significant segment of the German people did rise up, because they *were* heroes. About the various resistance groups of the prewar years Goldhagen has little to say, and about the participants in the attempt on Hitler's life of July 20, 1944, he concludes that they were mostly anti-Semitic and that their rebellion against the Nazi regime was not motivated chiefly by its treatment of the Jews. But from Joachim Fest's 1994 "Staatsstreich" ("Coup d'État") we know that Axel von dem Bussche-Streithorst, who was twenty-four at the time of the plot, turned against Hitler after witnessing a mass shooting of thousands of Jews at the Dubno airfield, in Ukraine, and that Ulrich-Wilhelm Graf Schwerin von Schwanenfeld was turned toward resistance after seeing what the *Einsatzgruppen* were up to in Poland. There are further such examples in the "Lexikon des Widerstandes 1933-1945," an honor roll of those who rebelled, and in a 1986 collection of essays by various historians entitled "Der Widerstand Gegen den Nationalsozialismus" ("The Resistance Against National Socialism"). It includes a list of the twenty July plotters, who, after the plot failed, told the Gestapo during their interrogation that the reason for their rebellion was the treatment of the Jews. There are several names you would expect: Julius Leber, Dietrich Bonhöffer, Adolf Reichwein, and Carl Goerdeler—men who had been scheming to get rid of Hitler even during the years of his success. But then there are names that smack of the *Almanach de Gotha*: Alexander and Berthold Graf Schenk von Stauffenberg, Hans von Dohnanyi, Heinrich Graf von Lehndorff, Helmuth James Graf von Moltke . . . There is no reason to think that these *Hochadel* sons were necessarily liberal. Some of them came from archconservative families, and no doubt a good number had grown up

with anti-Semitism hanging around the house like heavy curtains. Most of them were career officers who had relished the chance to rebuild the German Army; some even nursed the hopelessly romantic idea that after Hitler was killed Grossdeutschland might remain intact to go on fighting beside the Western Allies against the Soviet Union. But about the sincerity of their disgust at what happened to the Jews there can be no doubt. Though it could scarcely have made things easier for them, they told the Gestapo about it, thereby testifying to the sacrificial element in an enterprise that may have failed as a plot but succeeded as a ceremony—one that Germans of today are right to cherish.

How many of the German people were, from the Nazi angle, "unsound" on the Jewish question we can never know. But from the year the Nazis took power until Kristallnacht, in November, 1938, the legal deprivations and persecutions looked selective, as if there might be some limit beyond which they would not go. After Kristallnacht, it became clearer that a no-holds-barred pogrom was under way, but by then it was too late for everyone, non-Jewish Germans included. Really, it had been too late ever since the Nazis rewrote the laws so that their full apparatus of terror could be directed against anyone who disagreed with them. Is it any wonder that so many of those who retained their citizenship turned their backs on the pariahs from whom it had been stripped?

Goldhagen's thesis leaves the Nazis looking like last-minute walk-ons in the closing scene of "Götterdämmerung": spear-carriers in Valhalla. In his preliminary historical essay he paints a picture of anti-Semitism pervading all levels of society, without explaining how it failed to pervade the members of the political class who contrived to grant citizenship to the Jews. Beginning early in the nineteenth century, the process of emancipation moved through the German States, culminating, in 1869, with citizenship for every Jew in the North German Confederation. (The laws were carried over into the Kaiserreich after German unification, in 1871.) Even in the tolerant Austria-Hungary of Emperor Franz Josef, citizenship for Jews had some strings attached, whereas in Germany civil rights for Jews remained on the books until the Nazis rewrote them. Not even in the reign of Kaiser Wilhelm II, a

choleric anti-Semite by the end, were people of Jewish background deprived of their rights. They undoubtedly had trouble exercising them—prejudice was indeed everywhere, in varying degrees—but that doesn't alter the fact that they were granted them.

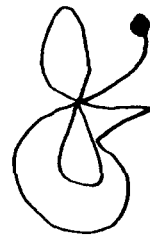
Perhaps those nineteenth-century politicians were thorough anti-Semites, and merely stopped short of trying to put their prejudice into law. President Truman freely used the word "nigger" among his Southern friends, but when some returning black G.I.s were beaten up he made the first move in the chain of legislation that eventually led (under President Johnson, who was not without prejudice, either) to voter registration by blacks in the South. There have always been people with prejudice who have nevertheless served justice, whether out of a supervening idealism, out of expediency, or out of a simple wish not to be thought provincial by more sophisticated peers. In other words, there is prejudice and there is prejudice. But Goldhagen wants all the grades of anti-Semitism, from the enthusiasm of nutty pamphleteers down to the mild distaste of the *Kleinbürgertum* at their dinner tables, to add up to just one thing: the eliminationist fervor that led to extermination as soon as it got its chance.

Until recent times, one of Germany's recurring troubles was that it was more integrated culturally than it was politically. A case can be made for the Jews not having been integrated at all into the political structure, although you would have to eliminate a towering figure like Walther Rathenau—which is exactly what some of the Nazi Party's forerunners did. But from the time of Goethe up until the Anschluss the Jews were, at least in part, integrated into the culture; they made a contribution whose like had not been seen in Europe since Alfonso IX founded the University of Salamanca. Though they often aroused envy and spite among non-Jewish rivals, they aroused admiration in at least equal measure. Goethe said that the Jewish contribution was vital. The novelist Theodor Fontane, who started out as an anti-Semite, gave up on the idea when he realized that the Jewish bourgeoisie was a more cultivated audience than the aristocracy, which he had tried in vain to enlighten. Even the dreadful Wagner was ambivalent on the subject: when Thomas Mann's Jewish father-in-law left Ger-

many, after the Nazis came to power, all he took with him were Wagner's letters of thanks for his having helped to build the *Festspielhaus* in Bayreuth. As for Mann himself, it has become fashionable lately to mock his supposed equivocation vis à vis the Nazi regime in its first years, because of the time that passed before he condemned it. But his 1933-34 diaries reveal that he loathed the bestiality of the new regime from its first day, and he went public in 1936 with a pronouncement on anti-Semitism, in which he definitively penetrated the unconscious logic of the Nazi mentality: "I might be nothing, but at least I'm not a Jew."

HISTORICAL research has by now established beyond question that the Nazi Party was principally financed not by the great capitalists of Brecht's imagination but by the *Kleinleute*—the little people. Reduced to despair by inflation and by the Depression, they assigned their hopes and their few spare pennies to the cause of the man they thought might rescue them from nothingness. He did, too—so triumphantly that they didn't suspect until the eleventh hour that he was leading them into a nothingness even more complete than the one they had come from. The Holocaust would have been unimaginable without the Nazi Party; the Nazi Party would have been unimaginable without Hitler; and Hitler's rise to power would have been unimaginable without the unique circumstances that brought the Weimar Republic to ruin. To hear Goldhagen tell it, mass murder was all set to go: a century-long buildup of eliminationist anti-Semitism simply had to express itself. But the moment when a historian says that something had to happen is the moment when he stops writing history and starts predicting the past.

After the Second World War, the British historian A. J. P. Taylor began publishing a series of books and articles which added up to the contention that Hitler's regime was the inevitable consequence of Germany's border problem, and that his depredations in the East were just a harsh version of what any German in his position would have been obliged to do anyway. Hitler's war, Taylor argued, brought Europe back to "reality," out of its liberal illusions. Then, in 1951, the German historian Golo Mann—one of Thomas



Mann's three sons—made a survey of Taylor's historical writings, and took them apart. He accused Taylor of predicting the past. The Weimar Republic, Mann pointed out, had been no liberal illusion and might have survived if extraordinary circumstances hadn't conspired to undermine it. German nationalism was not a demon that always strode armed through the land—it was in the minds of men, and could have stayed there. This confrontation between the frivolously clever Taylor and the deeply engaged Golo Mann was a portent of the intellectual conflict that blew up in Germany more than thirty years later, when the learned historian Ernst Nolte foolishly went to print with an opinion that sounded like one of Taylor's brain waves cast in more turgid prose: he stated that Nazi Germany, by attacking Russia, had simply got into the Cold War early, and that Nazi extermination camps had been the inevitable consequence of tangling with an enemy who was up to the same sort of thing. This time, there were plenty of German historians and commentators ready to oppose such views, because by now the perverse urge to marginalize the Nazis had penetrated the academic world, and had been identified as a trend that needed to be stopped. Younger historians who had looked up to Nolte hastened to distance themselves from him; the glamorous Michael Stürmer, in his virtuoso summary of modern German history "*Die Grenzen der Macht*" ("The Limits of Power"), consigned Nolte's theory to a dismissive passing reference. Stürmer also wrote a sentence about Hitler that is unfortunately likely to remain all too true: "Even today, the history of Hitler is largely the history of how he has been underestimated."

Why is this so? Strangely, anti-Semitism has probably played a part. Anti-Semitism is a world view through a pinhole: as scientists say about a bad theory, it is not even wrong. Nietzsche tried to tell Wagner that it was beneath contempt. Sartre was right for once when he said that through anti-Semitism any idiot could become a member of an élite. But, as the case of Wagner proves, a man can have this poisonous bee in his bonnet and still be a creative genius. Hitler was a destructive genius, whose evil gifts not only beggar description but invite denial, because we find it more comfortable to believe that their consequences were pro-

duced by historical forces than to believe that he *was* a historical force. Or perhaps we just lack the vocabulary. Not many of us, in a secular age, are willing to concede that, in the form of Hitler, Satan visited the Earth, recruited an army of sinners, and fought and won a battle against God. We would rather talk the language of pseudoscience, which at least seems to bring such cataclysmic events to order. But all that such language can do is shift the focus of attention down to the broad mass of the German people, which is what Goldhagen has done, in a way that, at least in part, lets Hitler off the hook—and unintentionally reinforces his central belief that it was the destiny of the Jewish race to be expelled from the *Volk* as an inimical presence.

Hannah Arendt, in her long, courageous, and much misunderstood career, had her weak moments. In her popular "*Eichmann in Jerusalem*" (first published serially in this magazine) she may have pushed her useful notion of the detached desk worker too far. But she was resoundingly right when she refused to grant the Nazis the power of their fait accompli. She declined to suppose, as Hitler had supposed, that there really was some international collectivity called the Jews. Echoing the fourth count of the Nuremberg indictment, she called the Holocaust a crime against humanity.

The Jews were the overwhelming majority among Hitler's victims, but he also killed all the Gypsies and homosexuals he could find. He let two and a half million Russian P.O.W.s perish, most of them from the gradually applied technique of deprivation. The novelist Joseph Roth, drinking himself to death in Paris before the war, said that Hitler probably had the Christians in his sights, too. We can never now trace the source of Hitler's passion for revenge, but we can be reasonably certain that there would have been no satisfying it had he lived. Sooner or later, he would have got around to everybody. Hitler was the culprit who gave all the other culprits their chance. To concentrate exclusively on the prejudice called anti-Semitism—to concentrate even on *his* anti-Semitism—is another way of underestimating him.

At the end of this bloodstained century, which has topped by ten times Tamburlaine's wall of skulls, lime, and living men, the last thing we want to

believe is that it all happened on a whim. In the Soviet Union, the liquidation of bourgeois elements began under Lenin. By the time Stalin took power, there were no bourgeois elements left. He went on finding them. He found them even within the Communist Party. They didn't exist. They never had existed. He killed them anyway. Eventually, he killed more people than Hitler, and it was all for nothing. Far from building socialism, he insured its ruin. His onslaught had nothing to do with social analysis, about which he knew no more than he did about biology. Unless you believe in Original Sin, there is almost no meaning that can be attached to his behavior, except to say that he was working out his personal problems.

In China, Mao Zedong went to war against the evil landlords and the imperialist spies. Neither group actually existed. The death toll of his countrymen exceeded the totals achieved by Hitler and Stalin combined. They all died for nothing. Dying innocent, they have their eternal dignity, but there are no profundities to be plumbed in their collective extinction except the adamant fact of human evil. In Cambodia, Pol Pot encouraged the persecution, torture, and murder of everyone who wore glasses—but enough. A country, no matter how cultured, either respects the rights of all its citizens or is not civilized. The answer to the nagging conundrum of how a civilized country like Germany could produce the Holocaust is that Germany ceased to be civilized from the moment Hitler came to power. It had been before, and it has been since—a fact that might secure for Goldhagen's book, when it is published there, a considered reception, despite its contents. I look forward to reading the German critical press, especially if one of the reviewers is Marcel Reich-Ranicki. Of Jewish background (his book about his upbringing in the Warsaw ghetto is a minor masterpiece), Reich-Ranicki is one of the most brilliant critical writers in the world. I know just where I want to read his piece: in my favorite café on the Oranienburger Strasse, just along from the meticulously restored synagogue, whose golden dome is a landmark for the district. Two armed guards stand at the door, but this time in its defense—a reminder of what Germany once did not only to others but to itself, and need not have done if democracy had held together. ♦

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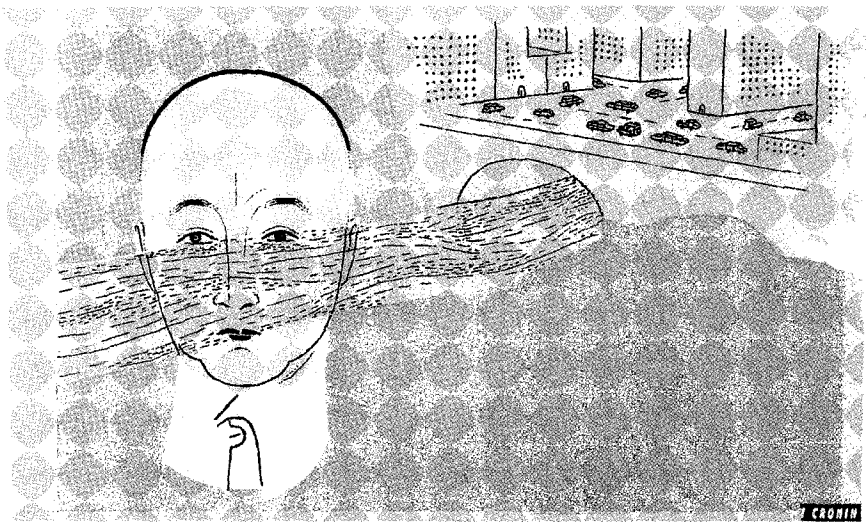
Is downsizing really news or is it just business as usual?

BY JOHN CASSIDY

THE term that has come to encapsulate the economic angst of the nineteen-nineties originated in Detroit more than twenty years ago. "Longer, lower, wider" is out. "Small, smaller, smallest" is in," *U.S. News & World Report* informed its readers in Sep-

"imperative to downsize the business."

It was at about this time that the first stories in the now rich literature of downsizing began to appear. *Business Week* published a cover story on the rising number of layoffs among middle managers and white-collar workers, de-



President Clinton's interagency study group on downsizing plans to issue a public report this month, and it is likely to surprise a lot of people.

tember of 1975, in the wake of the first OPEC oil-price shock. "Detroit's engineers call the current trend 'downsizing.' They concede that it's directly related to the rising cost of gasoline, and they see no reversal in the years ahead."

For several years, "downsizing" was restricted to the automobile industry, but by December of 1979 at least one commentator had recognized some broader possibilities. "It's an expression that equally could apply to the country in this time of transition," Haynes Johnson wrote in the *Washington Post*. When recession struck in 1981, and companies began to lay off workers by the thousand, "downsizing" made the leap to its current meaning. "CIGNA Corp. . . has embarked on a drastic downsizing" involving four thousand job cuts, *Business Week* reported in 1982. Six months later, General Electric announced that increased competition and overcapacity made it

claring, "Depression, anger, bewilderment, a subliminal sense of failure . . . these are some of the emotions engulfing many laid-off middle managers who once believed that at worst they would reach a career plateau." That was in April of 1983. At a hospital in Westchester one of the writers visited, Dr. Severio Mortati, a psychiatrist, reported sharp increases in alcoholism and depression among laid-off middle managers. His prediction for the victims' future was "many years of psychiatric disability."

In the thirteen years since that prognosis, news of downsizing has become a journalistic growth industry, with pieces ranging from the general, like "Downsizing the U.S. Workforce," a 1992 series in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and "Jobs in Jeopardy," a 1995 series in the *Christian Science Monitor*, to the particular, such as "Managers Without a Company," a 1985

BRIAN CROWIN

article in *Fortune*, and on to the humorous, with "So Big: It's a Down, Down, Down, Downsizing World," which ran in *Esquire* last year.

Given the forests already felled to tell this story, one might have expected a gradual slackening of interest, but in recent months coverage has gone from extensive to saturation-level, especially following Pat Buchanan's adoption of economic populism. It reached its peak in February and March when a *Newsweek* cover story entitled "Corporate Killers" was followed by a seven-part series in the *Times* entitled "The Downsizing of America." The latter weighed in at twenty-five pages and forty thousand words, took more than two dozen people seven months to produce, and was the longest piece of journalism published by the *Times* since the Pentagon Papers, in 1971, according to the paper's executive editor, Joseph Lelyveld.

When I asked Lelyveld why the *Times* had devoted so much space to the story, he said, "I just thought it was something very big in the nation's psyche and reality that nobody had really focussed on. My main calculation was that we were going into a campaign year, and the electorate was very unhappy. The economy grew pretty well in 1994, but the voters had turned heavily against incumbents."

Although hardly news, the *Times* articles were packed with moving accounts of the human costs of job cuts, and the cumulative effect was to leave many readers feeling that their jobs were more precious than they had ever imagined. A couple of weeks after the series appeared, the White House interagency group that coordinates economic policy decided to undertake a study of downsizing, and President Clinton made a speech in Cincinnati on "corporate citizenship." Robert Reich, the Labor Secretary, floated the idea of tax breaks for companies that eschew layoffs or retrain their workers for other jobs.

The Council of Economic Advisers and the Labor Department plan to issue a joint report by the end of this month. Its conclusions may surprise a lot of people. According to Dr. Joseph Stiglitz, the C.E.A. chairman, the report is intended to "correct a number of misguided perceptions which, however they got created, do distort the public debate." Prin-

cipal among the misconceptions, according to Stiglitz, is the notion that downsizing is an economic problem. As he said to me in an interview, "From my perspective, the process of downsizing is part of an ongoing restructuring that is in some senses healthy for the economy." He went on, "Our economy is changing, and it is doing a good job."

THE question that the White House and the Labor Department economists have been struggling with is a basic one: What is new about downsizing?



The answer is far from clear, and most of the press accounts have sidestepped the issue. The *Times*, for example, defined all job losses—even situations in which a laid-off employee immediately found another job—as downsizing and thereby came up with a total of forty-three million victims since 1979. This all-encompassing definition was reflected in one of the paper's headlines—"MORE THAN 43 MILLION JOBS LOST, REACHING EVERY WALK OF LIFE"—and it warrants scrutiny.

In a capitalist system, where resources, including people, are allocated in response to market forces, job creation and job destruction are inevitable aspects of economic development. Some companies prosper and hire more workers; others decline and resort to layoffs. This has always been true, for, as the Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter wrote back in 1942, "Capitalism . . . is by nature a form or method of economic change and not only never is but never can be stationary." Schumpeter called the competitive process "creative destruction," and identified it as "the essential fact about capitalism." Of the twelve companies originally included in the Dow Jones Industrial Average, which is a hundred years old this year, only one, General Electric, has survived. The rest have either merged or gone out of business.

It is true that there has been a high rate of layoffs since the last recession ended, in March of 1991: according to the *Times*, job losses grew from 3.3 million in 1991 to 3.43 million in 1992 and stayed at 3.38 million in 1993 even as the economy entered its third year of recovery. The difficulty comes in trying to figure out what has happened since 1993. Generalizing about a \$6.8-trillion

economy on the basis of informal evidence is dangerous, and there are no reliable figures for aggregate job losses since the end of 1993, nor will there be any until the Labor Department concludes its biennial Displaced Workers Survey (D.W.S.). The Labor Department counts the number of new jobs in the economy and the number of unemployed every month, but job losses themselves are not recorded on a regular basis. The most recent available survey was carried out in 1994 and covered the period from 1991 to 1993. Another survey, covering the period from 1993 to 1995, was completed in February of this year, but its results will not be available until this summer. Yet the D.W.S., which is based on a sample of fifty thousand households, is the prime source of evidence on job losses. This lack of recent data has presented a major problem to all investigators of downsizing, including the *Times* reporters, as one Labor Department official came to realize. "What they said was 'Our editors say we have to have something to say about what is happening now,'" Thomas Nardone, an economist at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, recalls. "And we said, 'Whoops. Sorry. We can't provide those figures yet.'"

The *Times* team faced a tough choice. Either the writers could stop their analysis at the end of 1993 and admit ignorance of more recent trends or they could try to construct their own figures for the ensuing years. On the orders of their editors, they chose the second option. "They did it under great pressure, because I didn't want the chart to stop at 1993," Lelyveld says. To generate figures for job losses in 1994 and 1995, the *Times* used a statistical-regression model based on the past relationship between job losses and unemployment, while accounting for the growth of the labor force. The model's estimates—3.34 million job losses in 1994 and 3.26 million in 1995—were added to Labor Department figures for earlier years and were included in the headline total of forty-three million jobs lost since 1979. (The 1994 and 1995 figures were labelled estimates in a chart and an accompanying footnote.)

Nardone and other economists warn that the *Times* estimate should be received cautiously. "They made it up—they did it intelligently, but nonetheless

it was more or less an extrapolation," Henry Farber, a professor of economics at Princeton who specializes in job displacement, told me. "I don't think there is any hard evidence on what's happened in the last two years."

At the White House, Stiglitz, a former professor at Princeton, Stanford, and Oxford and one of the leading economic theorists of his generation, also takes issue with the *Times*' estimates of job losses since 1993, pointing out that the unemployment rate has fallen in that period. When I asked Stiglitz if he was saying that the *Times*' estimates for 1994 and 1995 should be taken with a grain of salt, he replied, "That's right," and also delivered a detailed critique of the paper's claim that the rate of layoffs rose significantly in the early nineteen-nineties. Stiglitz pointed out that the Labor Department's raw figures do not show any rise in the job-displacement rate; in fact, they show a drop. During 1991-92, 3.8 per cent of all jobs were lost, whereas a decade earlier, in 1981-82, the figure was 3.9 per cent. Despite this, the *Times*, which was using a different sample, concluded that the underlying rate of job displacement actually increased in the early nineties when allowance was made for the fact that the economic downturn then was much milder than the recession a decade earlier.

"What they did was extrapolate from the differences in the depths of the recessions that there had been a change in the displacement rate," Stiglitz explained. He went on, "It isn't convincing. Our best guess is that the displacement rate is probably up some, but not as much as they said."

At Princeton, Henry Farber has produced a new research paper, covering the period 1981 to 1993, which also finds a moderate increase in displacement rates. "Rates of job loss are up relative to the standard of the last decade, particularly when account is taken of the state of the labor market," he writes. According to his calculations, 13.4 per cent of America's workers lost their jobs between 1991 and 1993. This compares with 12.8 per cent in 1981-83—a period that included a deep recession—and 10.4 per cent in 1983-85, a time of economic recovery. There is also some evidence, provided by Robert Valletta, an economist at the Federal Reserve

Bank of San Francisco, that layoffs are more likely to be permanent than they used to be.

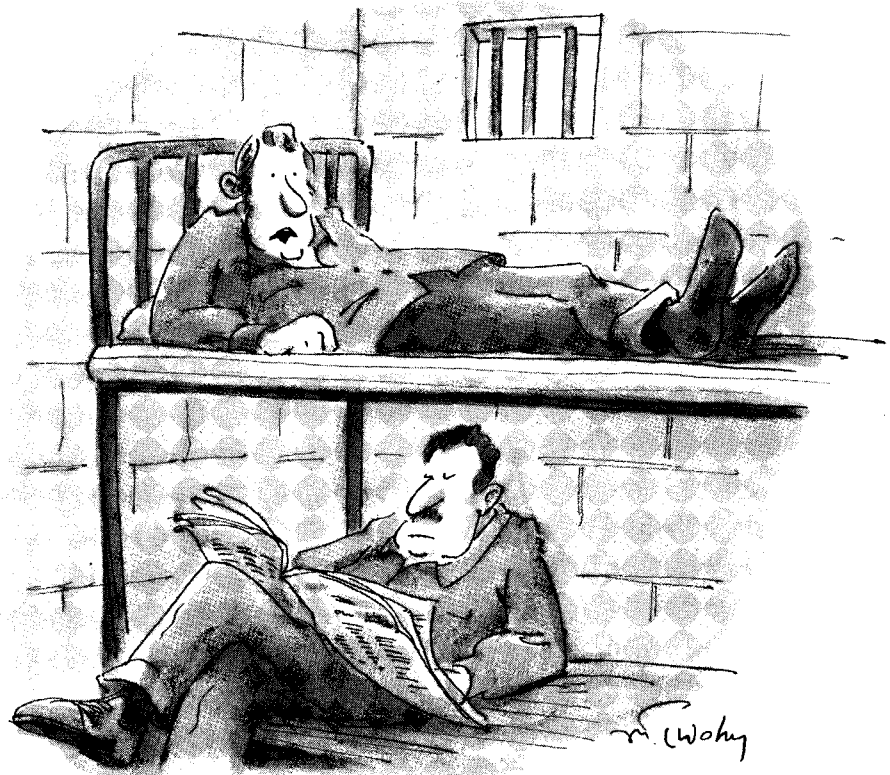
THE arrival of Farber's paper and the imminent publication of the White House report should permit a more dispassionate discussion of downsizing. Taken together, they suggest that what is really new about the downsizing phenomenon is not its absolute scale as much as its impact on the upper echelons of society. An increasing number of its victims are middle-aged, educated, and affluent. Rising layoffs are particularly noticeable among middle-aged men. Between 1981 and 1983, ten per cent of men between forty-five and fifty-four and eleven per cent of men between fifty-five and sixty-four got laid off, according to Farber. Ten years later, in 1991-93, the three-year job-loss rates for these two groups rose to fourteen per cent and seventeen per cent, respectively. The Farber study also suggests that higher education is providing less effective insulation against job loss than it used to. Between 1981 and 1983, less than eight per cent of male college graduates lost their jobs. A decade later, the figure rose to eleven per cent.

Perhaps the most dramatic change

came in the way job losses were split between the factory floor and the executive suite. Between 1991 and 1993, the rate of job loss among manual workers was fourteen per cent, down from twenty-one per cent a decade earlier. Among managers, by contrast, the job-loss rate rose from eight per cent in 1981-83 to ten per cent in 1991-93.

Government researchers have also found that the proportion of white-collar layoffs has increased, but great care needs to be taken in drawing broad conclusions from this development. In particular, it doesn't mean that job stability has declined throughout the economy, or that long-term employment is a thing of the past. As the Labor Department noted last year, in its most recent "Report on the American Workforce," "Several types of statistics are available that indicate whether there have been shifting trends in job stability. These include data on job tenure, retention rates, job turnover and part-year work. All suggest that there has been little change in overall job stability."

The figures on job tenure are particularly counterintuitive. While the media have made much of the supposed decline in lifetime-employment relationships, a number of academic studies sug-



"After the judicial system, I'm my own harshest critic."

gest that the fraction of workers who have been in the same job for a decade or more has remained fairly constant (at least until 1993, the last year for which we have data).

The seminal research on long-term jobs in the economy was published in 1982, by Robert Hall, a Stanford economist. The subject was revisited recently by the economists Francis Diebold, David Neumark, and Daniel Polsky, in a paper published by the National Bureau of Economic Research: in 1994, they looked at ten-year "retention rates," which measure the chances of a typical worker's retaining his current job for ten years or longer. To their surprise, the researchers discovered that the probability of an employee's retaining his job for a full decade actually went up slightly between 1973 and 1991—a finding that, they said, "indicates that longer-term job stability increased slightly in the 1980s and early 1990s relative to the 1970s."

Farber, too, has tested the hypothesis of declining long-term-employment relationships. In a paper published last year, he studied the proportion of workers who have been in the same jobs for more than twenty years—that is, in true "lifetime jobs"—and found that it had remained virtually constant since 1973. "The idea that our economy is not producing long-term jobs anymore strikes me as totally unsupported by the evidence," he told me.

NONE of this means that the downsized do not suffer; what it does mean is that their fate needs to be placed in context. Another of the virtues of Farber's study is that he fulfills this need calmly and analytically. According to his figures, over the period 1981-93 fully twenty-five per cent of displaced workers did not find another job during any given three-year survey period, another twenty-five per cent found only part-time employment, and seven per cent ended up self-employed.

But, contrary to common belief, people who lost their jobs in 1993 suffered no more than those laid off in 1983. In Farber's words, "The consequences of job loss have always been serious, they are still serious, but they have not got more serious." Indeed, some of Farber's figures suggest that people who were laid off in the nineties fared better than their peers a decade earlier did. For example, the

fraction of workers downsized during a three-year survey period who had found another job by the survey date was 66.9 per cent in 1991-93, compared with only 58.9 per cent in 1981-83. It would be hard to guess from reading recent press accounts that the probability of finding a new job after being laid off has increased over the past decade, but that is exactly what this evidence suggests.

The White House has found similar results. According to Stiglitz, the median displaced worker remains unemployed for about eight weeks before he finds a new job. This has remained pretty constant since the late eighties, but the chances of a displaced worker staying out of work for more than six months have fallen sharply. Preliminary figures show that in 1982-83 about thirty per cent of recently laid-off males were still without employment six months later, while in 1994-95 the proportion dropped to eighteen per cent.

It is true that displaced workers who find new jobs usually have to take a pay cut, but anecdotal reports saying that victims of downsizing have suffered earnings losses of thirty or forty per cent are simply not borne out in the aggregate figures. According to Farber, the average wage reduction suffered by displaced workers who found new jobs in the period between 1981 and 1993 was fourteen per cent. This represents a significant pay cut, to be sure, but it is much lower than the numbers bandied about in some discussions. ("People making \$150,000 resurrect themselves making \$50,000," the *Times* declared.) As for the earnings losses suffered by most managerial and professional downsizeds, they are less severe than the over-all fourteen-per-cent figure would indicate, for two reasons: highly educated workers are less likely to end up in part-time jobs, which don't pay as well, and they also suffer less severe pay cuts in moving from one full-time job to another. The average pay cut suffered by workers downsized from full-time jobs who found new full-time jobs was about nine

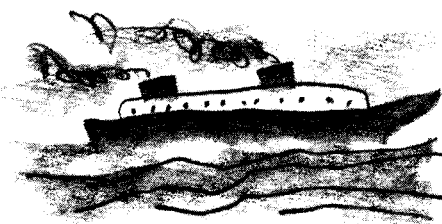
per cent. Among college graduates who moved from one full-time job to another, the average pay cut was just 6.2 per cent, Farber says. In summarizing his results, he concludes, "The more educated have higher post-displacement employment rates, are more likely to be employed full time, have more stable employment histories, and suffer smaller proportional earnings losses on average." He also notes that although more educated workers are now losing their jobs, they are still far less likely to be laid off than manual and unskilled workers.

These findings should not surprise anybody. The most striking development in the American economy over last thirty years is the increasing disparity in income and wealth between the educated and the uneducated, the skilled and the unskilled. For the past three decades, the intensification of global capitalism has been undermining the living standards and the prospects of the unskilled. That process is continuing, and although the rigors of competition are now striking some of those who were previously protected, the costs of economic progress are still being borne primarily by the poor and the ill-educated.

IN the debate over downsizing, it makes little sense to focus on job loss in isolation from job creation, but that is what most of the media have done—and for an obvious journalistic reason. When downsizing is judged in relation to upsizing, it looks like a far less serious problem. The central fact that has been underplayed in news reports—the *Times* articles did mention it several times in passing—is that companies are doing a lot of hiring as well as firing, and, in many cases, more hiring than firing.

Since 1979—the period in which, according to the *Times*, there were at least forty-three million job losses—total employment in the economy has risen from 98.8 million to 126.1 million, a net increase of 27.3 million. Even if the *Times* estimate of job losses is exaggerated, this means that, over all, more than sixty million new jobs have been created since 1979, a truly astounding number. Since the beginning of 1993 alone, there has been a net increase of about 8.5 million jobs, and since January job gains have been averaging two hundred and six thousand a month.

The ability of the United States econ-



omy to create jobs at a rate matching its rapid population growth distinguishes it sharply from many other industrial economies, especially those in Europe. In fact, it is scarcely exaggerating to say that the job-creating capacity of the United States economy is the envy of the developed world. While American commentators worry about downsizing, the talk in Paris and Berlin is about how best to mimic American job creation. European Union unemployment is currently stuck at eleven per cent—almost double the United States rate of 5.6 per cent. This winter in Germany, the unemployment rate rose to 11.1 per cent, the highest it has been since 1948.

To most economists, including those in the White House, the flexibility of the American economy is its greatest strength. As Stiglitz says, "The issue from an over-all economic perspective is: Are we creating enough jobs for new entrants to the labor force and for those workers who lose their jobs? In this respect, the economy has been performing very well. It has managed to create enough jobs for the people who have been downsized and the new entrants."

THE results of the White House study have been eagerly awaited inside the Clinton Administration, where an apparent split has developed between one group, led by Robert Reich, which wants a more aggressive reaction to economic anxiety, and another, led by Laura D'Andrea Tyson, the National Economic Adviser, and Robert Rubin, the Treasury Secretary, who oppose some of Reich's ideas. A few weeks ago, when the media stampede was at its most thunderous, Reich appeared to be gaining ground, but the upbeat tone of the imminent report seems designed to support those who are advising caution.

"The over-all picture hasn't changed as much as would have been my prior belief," Tyson told me. "If you had asked before the study, I would have presumed that the chance of a person finding a similar job after being displaced had declined over the past ten years, but that hasn't happened."

Given these facts, Tyson argues that the Administration should concentrate on its existing agenda of "helping people make these painful transitions" by expanding retraining programs and making

health coverage more portable. "The United States has always had a high rate of job displacement," she notes. "You can say that that means a high degree of flexibility, which it does, but you can also say that it means a fair amount of anxiety and dislocation, which it does, too. We understand there is an upside and a downside to this."

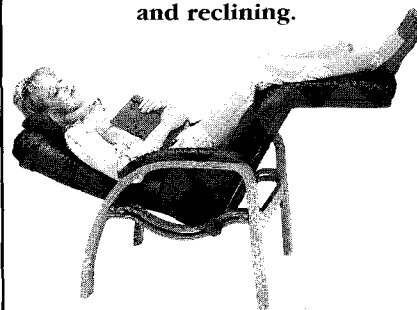
Stiglitz, who is overseeing the final report, is intent upon dispelling the widespread belief that most of the jobs created in the past few years are low-paying positions. "What our study shows is that the quality of jobs being created, particularly in the last year, has been above average," he says. According to the White House's preliminary findings, sixty-eight per cent of all the new jobs created between February of 1994 and February of 1996 were in occupations and industries that pay above-average wages, such as high technology and finance. What is more, a remarkable sixty per cent of all net employment growth in the past three years has come in managerial and professional positions, a sector of the economy which makes up only twenty-eight per cent of the labor force and is widely said to have been the most damaged by corporate downsizing.

Stiglitz says the downsizing report is intended to initiate a rational discussion, not to recommend particular policies, but his views are unmistakably laissez-faire. "The economic growth that we have comes from expanding those sectors of the economy that have comparative advantage, which is what should happen," he says. "But the flip side of some sectors' expanding is that other sectors have to shrink. The new workers for the expanding firms have to come from somewhere."

Even Labor Secretary Reich now says that the media and politicians have overplayed downsizing. "Pat Buchanan may have got that entire subject off track," he told me. "Obviously, companies sometimes have to lay off workers. The real issue is: Do you invest in your workers? Do you regard them as costs or as assets?" According to Reich, upgrading the skills and productivity of American workers is the only way to address what he sees as the central problem—stagnant wages and rising inequality. "By focussing on one epiphenomenon, downsizing, you may lose sight of the important question," he says. ♦

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A REPORTER AT LARGE

HOW INDEPENDENT IS THE COUNSEL?

What, exactly, are the allegiances and alliances of Kenneth Starr, the counsel on the Whitewater investigation?

BY JANE MAYER

IN the autumn of 1993, James Carville, the Democratic political consultant, was sitting in the V.I.P. lounge at Washington's National Airport. Carville was a famous man by then—the autumn before, he had managed the Clinton Presidential campaign, and his face and his colorful personality had been featured on television many times—and he was used to being approached by strangers. This time, as he recounted the story to me recently, the stranger was an affable, well-dressed middle-aged man, who began talking intensely about President Clinton's failings. "Your boy's getting rolled!" the man said, according to Carville. "He doesn't stand for anything!" The consultant thanked his new acquaintance for his views, "but he just kept going," Carville says. "He sounded like someone who had just listened to three hours of Rush Limbaugh." In passing, the man told Carville that he was a former judge, and that his name was Ken Starr.

Less than a year later—on August 5, 1994—when Carville learned that Kenneth W. Starr had been appointed to replace Robert B. Fiske, Jr., as the new independent counsel in charge of the Whitewater investigation, he was astounded. "He clearly was someone who really disliked Clinton," Carville says of Starr. "An avowed enemy of the President was being given all this power. I thought then, and I think now, that it's intolerable."

At the time of Starr's appointment, no one at the White House was interested in acting on Carville's apprehensions about Starr's impartiality. Carville is a hot-tempered political brawler, an outsider in Washington's white-shoe legal world, and an emotional, visceral defender of Clinton. Starr, at forty-nine, is one of the most prominent Repub-

lican attorneys of his generation. He had a reputation for fair-mindedness not only among Republicans but among Democrats. His admirers included such Clinton Administration officials as Walter Dellinger, then head of the office of legal counsel at the Justice Department, who had been a professor of Starr's at the Duke law school, and Abner Mikva, soon to be named White House counsel, who had served with Judge Starr in the nineteen-eighties on the District of Columbia Circuit Court of Appeals (where Starr's vote to overturn a libel judgment against the *Washington Post* helped his image as an independent jurist). Lloyd Cutler, a dean of the capital's legal establishment, who was the President's counsel at the time of the appointment, dismissed Carville's rallying call to stop it. A White House official explains, "You don't take on a prosecutor with life-and-death power over every aspect of your life."

Carville, however, continued to be incensed. Four days after Starr's appointment was announced, he sent a letter to Leon Panetta, the White House Chief of Staff, declaring that he would give up his White House pass and his paid consulting relationship with the Democratic National Committee—he would quit—in order to speak out against Starr. Cutler persuaded him to stay on, and the episode was kept quiet.

Twenty months later, many White House officials have come to share Carville's alarm, and see Starr as a serious threat. But they also see the prosecutor's image problems, which have lately grown quite serious, as a political opportunity. Until now, White House officials declined to address the controversy about Starr, although they willingly faxed negative news clips about

him to any reporter who asked. The White House counsel, Jack Quinn, broke that silence for the first time last week, when he told me that, "while we are cooperating fully with" Starr, "we are of course concerned about anything that calls into question his fairness and independence." At this point, in fact, such concerns may be the best defense the White House has against Starr's widening investigation. His defenders have already started to debunk the negative publicity as little more than the liberal press demonizing Starr for political reasons.

But Starr's critics are no longer limited to Clinton partisans in the White House and elsewhere. A number of independent legal and government ethics experts have begun to speak out against Starr's decision to remain an active partner at the Chicago-based law firm of Kirkland & Ellis: he continues to represent dozens of clients, some of whom have markedly anti-Clinton agendas, at the same time as he is conducting an investigation that has the potential to cripple the President of the United States. The editorial page of the *Times*, which has applauded the Whitewater investigation, recently called Starr to task for "conflicts of interest that are hanging over his investigation." It urged him to take a full leave from his law firm and turn over certain aspects of the investigation to a deputy.

The office of independent counsel was created in 1978 to supplant the duties of the "special prosecutor"—the original nomenclature perhaps remains more accurately descriptive of the position's duties—and carries with it, as many critics have noted, a built-in incentive for overzealousness: only the most self-confident lawyer, having spent months of his or her time and

hundreds of thousands, or even millions, of taxpayer dollars on an investigation, can come back empty-handed. In the case of Kenneth Starr, this built-in incentive, which would apply to anyone in his or a similar position, is complicated by three additional factors. The first factor is what might be called occupational: in his private law practice, Starr has represented and continues to represent large corporate interests (the Brown & Williamson tobacco company is the most prominent example) that have a major stake in the failure of the Clinton Administration and its policies. The second is political: Starr, long an active Republican, has well-documented if somewhat diffuse ambitions for public office, and the outcome of the Whitewater investigation could have profound consequences for his ability to realize those ambitions. The third is ideological: Starr has ties to a variety of "movement" conservative foundations and organizations that have eagerly promoted anti-Clinton activities.

The question that has been increasingly raised about him is whether he is indeed "independent"—without a political, financial, or personal stake in the outcome of his investigation. "There's a growing perception that the Whitewater investigation has been politicized because of Ken Starr's conduct," asserts Stephen Gillers, a professor of legal ethics at New York University Law School, where Starr teaches.

Starr's independent ethics consultant, Samuel Dash, who in 1973 and 1974 was chief counsel to the Senate Watergate Committee, says that Starr's decision to continue representing private

clients while investigating the President violates neither professional ethics, as they are narrowly defined for legal purposes, nor the law that specifies the duties of an independent counsel. "If I had my own preferences, I'd hope he'd be a full-time independent counsel," Dash says. "What he's doing is proper. . . . But it does have an odor to

ered a speech to the Federal Bar Association, in San Antonio, where he spent much of his childhood. In the talk, Starr observed that since the Independent Counsel Act was passed, in 1978, there have been seventeen such counsels. "Sixteen of the seventeen, including all of those now in service, have remained with their respective law firms," Starr said. The seventeenth—Judge Lawrence Walsh, who headed the Iran-Contra investigation—"was a fully retired partner from his New York law firm."

Starr's responsibility, however, is far greater than that of most of his predecessors. Katy J. Harriger, an associate professor of politics at Wake Forest University and the author of "Independent Justice," a book about the office of independent counsel, points out that in only two instances have independent counsels scrutinized a sitting President: Iran-Contra and Whitewater. The Iran-Contra counsel, like the Watergate special prosecutors before him, regarded his role as a full-time job. Moreover, Harriger says, independent counsels, not only in the big cases but in the smaller, non-Presidential ones as well, have generally been "people who were perceived as either above

politics or as having avoided politics." Starr and his defenders point out that Archibald Cox, who was fired in the 1973 Saturday Night Massacre, was seen by Richard Nixon as a political enemy. But his replacement, the prosecutor at the time of Nixon's resignation, was Leon Jaworski, who the year before had been a member of Texas Democrats for Nixon. Starr, Harriger says, "is uniquely identified very clearly with the President's opponents." The risk, she says, is that "someone perceived as too



For the first time in his career, Starr appears to be in danger of damaging not only his own reputation but the investigation he has undertaken.

it." Dash also worries about the process that led to Starr's appointment. "Should Fiske have been reappointed?" he mused recently. "My answer is probably yes. It may have been a mistake"—removing Fiske. "But that's not Ken's fault."

Dash says that he has "strongly advised" Starr to answer questions about the controversies that surround him, but Starr, citing the sensitivity of his task, has declined all requests for interviews. Last week, however, he deliv-

partisan can't be taken seriously. If the goal is to do justice, this undermines it terrifically."

UNTIL Starr became associated with the Whitewater investigation, he appeared to be almost universally admired. With his Southern "Yes, sirs" and "Yes, ma'ams," and his ability to recall the name of almost everyone he has met, he is known for affability, respectability, and probity. As Robert Fairbank, a former colleague in the West Coast-based law firm of Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, puts it, "He's one of the least maligned people I've ever met, given the high-profile positions he's taken."

A Sunday-school teacher and a softball coach, Starr is the son of a fundamentalist minister from Texas. Three decades ago, he was selling Bibles door to door in order to pay his college tuition. Louis Butterfield, Starr's roommate at Harding College, in Searcy, Arkansas, a Church of Christ-affiliated school, recalls that Starr had large political ambitions even as an undergraduate. After two years at Harding, he transferred to George Washington University. Butterfield says that Starr left Harding because he wanted a political-science department "that could help put him on the map." Butterfield, who is now a professor of communications at Harding, recalls a conversation with Starr before he left the college. "I said, 'Where you going to go, Ken?' He said, 'As far as I can.' I said, 'What's that mean? President?' He said, 'We'll see.'"

After getting a master's degree in political science at Brown University in 1969, Starr went to law school at Duke. It was the time of the Vietnam War, but he received a 4-F classification from his draft board because of a psoriasis condition. Classmates recall him as exceptionally mature—as one puts it, he was wearing three-piece suits when everyone else was drinking beer, smoking marijuana, and hanging out in cut-off jeans.

Starr had a talent for attracting mentors. He joined Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher in 1974 but took two years off to accept a position as a clerk to Supreme Court Chief Justice Warren

Burger. When Starr returned to the firm, he was taken under the wing of William French Smith, a powerful senior partner, who was Ronald Reagan's personal lawyer. When Reagan was elected President four years later, Smith became Attorney General. He, in turn, brought in Starr as his chief of staff, and that launched Starr's Washington career.

Since then, Starr has occupied two prestigious posts in the legal world: he was a Circuit Court of Appeals judge under Reagan, and he was Solicitor General of the United States under George Bush. When Bush lost to Clinton, and Starr was for the first time since 1981 available to work in the private sector, *The American Lawyer* called him "the most valuable property to come on the Washington, D.C., legal market in well over a decade." He reportedly came close to being named to the Supreme Court by Bush, but his chances of being confirmed were hurt after he argued, as Solicitor General, the Administration's position against *Roe v. Wade*, the landmark abortion case. Starr has talked about this missed opportunity as a great disappointment. In fact, he is often still cited as someone certain to be placed on most short lists of potential Republican Supreme Court nominees, and, according to friends and associates, it's an ambition that he continues to cherish.



Yet many now doubt whether Starr, having accepted his current position, will ever serve on the high court. Terry Adamson, a Democratic lawyer in Washington who has been a friend of Starr's for more than twenty years, says, referring to the independent-counsel job, "I told him it was a no-winner when he was asked to do it. I told him controversy was inevitable. I hated to see a guy with an almost unassailable record get into this." But he suggests that Starr's commitment to public service is so strong that "I don't think not doing it ever entered his mind."

But Starr decided not to give up his law practice. One acquaintance suggests that the reason was quite simple: money. Starr, he goes on, has spent more than half his professional life as a public servant, yet he socializes with some of the wealthiest people in Wash-

ington. Although his three children attend private school, the family still lives in an ordinary brick rambler in the Virginia suburb of McLean. Only in 1993, when he joined Kirkland & Ellis, did his income become truly substantial, reaching a reported one million six hundred thousand dollars a year.

Today, Starr's large roster of clients—the businesses, organizations, and individuals who provide his financial security—includes several with partisan interests. Moreover, in the outside organizations with which he continues to be associated, he has allied himself with Clinton enemies. As a result he appears to be in danger of doing real damage not only to his own reputation, for the first time in his career, but also to the investigation he has undertaken. Perhaps more lastingly, the controversy may damage the office of the independent counsel, which has become the subject of fresh criticism and of a new review by Congress.

THE events that led to the appointment of Kenneth Starr began in late 1993, when questions about the Clintons' past financial dealings in Arkansas were being raised with increasing frequency. Critics were calling for an investigation into the propriety of their investment in a real-estate venture, the Whitewater Development Company; the company was co-owned by James B. McDougal, the owner of the Madison Guaranty Savings & Loan, which had collapsed under suspicious circumstances. Meanwhile, the statute authorizing the appointment of an independent counsel by a special judicial panel had been allowed to lapse by Congress. In its absence, the President, in January of 1994, asked Attorney General Janet Reno to appoint a special prosecutor. Faced with a difficult decision, Reno selected Robert Fiske, a highly respected New York lawyer and a Republican, as a special prosecutor with the power to act as independent counsel in the Whitewater matter.

On June 30, 1994, the same day that a new Independent Counsel Act was signed, Fiske issued a report on the death of Vincent Foster, Jr., the deputy White House counsel, finding that it was clearly a suicide, and was not linked to Whitewater. Many had expected

Fiske to be reappointed under the new law, but ten conservative House members, in a letter to the panel empowered to appoint the independent counsel, assailed him for a series of what they deemed to be conflicts of interest. Fiske had taken a full leave of absence from his New York law firm in order to oversee the federal investigation, but the firm had represented the International Paper Company, which had sold land to the Whitewater Development Company, in matters unrelated to the Whitewater deal. The congressmen also claimed that Fiske had a "long-standing relationship," professionally and socially, with the White House counsel, Bernard Nussbaum. All this, the congressmen wrote, along with what they held to be failings of the report on Foster's death, constituted grounds for his removal. The ultimate strike against him, they wrote, was that he had reported to a Democratic attorney general. In August of 1994, a three-judge panel removed Fiske, citing the appearance of a conflict of interest arising from Reno's role in naming him.

Starr's appointment came the same day, and was almost immediately touched by political innuendo when, a week later, the *Washington Post* reported that at the time the panel was considering Fiske's removal David Sentelle, the panel's presiding judge—a conservative Republican who owed his seat to the ultraconservative North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms—had had lunch with two of Clinton's harshest critics: Helms and his fellow North Carolina senator, Lauch Faircloth. All three deny that they exchanged a word about Starr or Fiske, and there is no evidence to the contrary. But because the independent counsel's office is supposed to be insulated from partisan political interests, and because Senator Faircloth had accused Fiske of conducting "a coverup" to protect the Clinton Administration, Starr was vulnerable to criticism that he had been picked in order to further an anti-Clinton political agenda. (A few months after Fiske's removal, Judge



"I think I should warn you that the flip side of our generous bonus-incentive program is capital punishment."

Sentelle's wife went to work for Senator Faircloth as an office receptionist, at a reported annual salary of twenty thousand dollars.)

It now appears that Starr at the time of his appointment had a bigger problem than Fiske: he was representing the very company that had got Fiske into trouble—International Paper. Filings in an environmental suit in Jay, Maine, bear Starr's name as co-counsel. Jack Levin, a senior partner at Kirkland & Ellis, confirms Starr's role, but says that he spent only a few hours on the case. Apparently, the firm realized the compromising nature of the connection, because, as soon as Starr was appointed, it quietly withdrew from the case and declined to further represent the client. (By contrast, Fiske had not handled any matters for the company in years.)

There is another unexpected comparison with Fiske. The former prosecutor was attacked for his supposed professional associations with Clinton partisans, including Bernard Nussbaum. But Starr's current clients include partisans on the other side. The accusation of guilt by association may seem unfair, but it is Starr's misfortune that this same standard was used against his predecessor.

Of particular interest is a key test case that Starr argued, in the midst of

his Whitewater duties, before the Wisconsin Supreme Court. The case is an effort to uphold the state's experimental school-choice program, which would provide public money to low-income families who want to send their children to private schools, including religious ones. The position that Starr argued, at the request of Wisconsin's Republican governor, Tommy Thompson, is in direct opposition to the Clinton Administration's policy on school vouchers, a campaign issue.

Complicating matters further is the role of the archconservative Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation. Last summer, the powerful nonprofit foundation, which gives money to many of Clinton's most virulent critics, retained Starr as a consultant on the school-choice issue. Michael Joyce, the foundation's president, sees its role as "investing in ideas." It gives away more than twenty million dollars a year, much of it to like-minded think tanks, research, and publications, and also to civic and cultural organizations in Wisconsin, where it is based. Two of its favorite recipients have been entities integrally involved in what the historian Garry Wills describes as the Whitewater "scandal industry": *The American Spectator* (which has criticized me) and the Free Congress Foundation,

which runs National Empowerment Television. N.E.T. in particular has been a tireless promoter of Whitewater stories. Its president, Paul Weyrich, claims in one mailing that "N.E.T. viewers" generated "a major portion of the pressure" to appoint an independent counsel in the case.

Jay Lefkowitz, the Kirkland & Ellis partner who is working with Starr on the school-voucher issue, stresses that Starr's employment by the Bradley Foundation ended last fall, as soon as the case was actually filed. Starr, he says, no longer works for Bradley—"he represents the State of Wisconsin." But the Bradley Foundation has given a hundred-and-fifty-thousand-dollar grant to the state to cover the legal costs. And Lefkowitz himself worked as a consultant to the foundation before Starr brought him to Kirkland & Ellis as an associate.

The Wisconsin case has attracted attorneys from two other conservative political organizations, the Landmark Legal Foundation and the Institute for Justice, both of which have in the past received money from the Bradley Foundation and have sharply attacked the Clinton Administration. Landmark has volunteered its services to, among others, L. Jean Lewis, the whistle-blower at the Resolution Trust Corporation, who began calling for an investigation into Clinton's ties to the failed Madison Guaranty Savings & Loan even before he was elected President. Lewis was a star witness in last summer's House Banking Committee hearings, alleging that the Clintons may have been witnesses to "rampant bank fraud" and an "elaborate check-kiting" scheme.

Mark Bredemier, the Landmark attorney who has been working on the school-voucher case, acknowledges that, like all the organization's lawyers, he is involved in representing Jean Lewis. But he says that he hasn't spoken to Starr about Whitewater. Nor has he broached the so-called Travelgate affair, one aspect of which has been placed within the scope of Starr's investigation. Landmark was one of the most vociferous critics of the Clinton Administration's handling of the White House travel office. Landmark's legal-policy director, Mark Levin, was among the first to demand that an independent coun-

sel investigate what he called "this unseemly episode," in which the White House ham-handedly tried to replace the old travel-office staff with Clinton associates.

It does not, of course, follow that Starr's crisscrossing ties to Clinton foes and his links to the conservative foundations funding them will compromise his neutrality. The highly regarded Sam Dash, who says that he has faith in Starr's integrity, considers such inferences unwarranted. "It's unprofessional



to tag a lawyer with the social views of his client," says Dash, who teaches legal ethics and criminal justice at the Georgetown University Law Center. "It's not fair to say he got a fee from the Bradley Foundation because he espouses their views." Yet Michael Joyce, the foundation's president, told me that Starr's convictions regarding school choice were one reason that he had hired Starr. This issue, Joyce said, "has Ken Starr all over it. He's the best guy in the country, and he has a huge, long-standing interest in this."

School choice is not just a minor or incidental legal issue for the foundation. Joyce sees it as perhaps the pivotal offensive in the conservative attack on what he regards as liberal culture. In a 1993 seminar sponsored by *National Review*, he argued that the issue could be used to undercut liberals by making powerful school bureaucracies the enemy. By taking on these clients, Starr has allowed himself to become enmeshed in the conservative culture wars. "If it was just one instance of Ken Starr associated with the Bradley Foundation, it might be O.K.," says Ellen Miller, the executive director of the Center for Responsive Politics, a nonpartisan research organization. "But you don't have to scratch far beneath the surface to find not just one but many, many, many conflicts of interest."

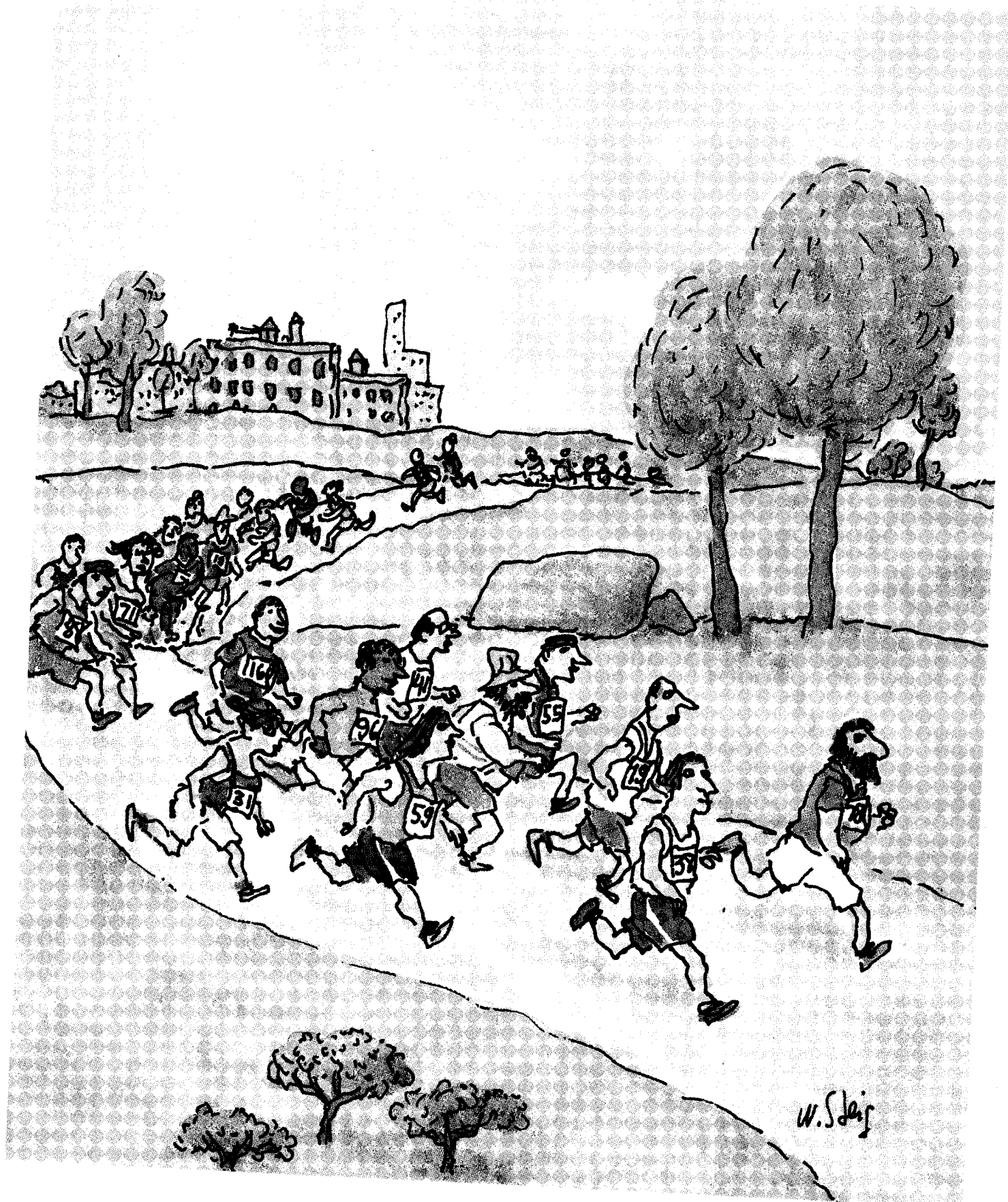
According to Starr's federal disclosure forms, he continues to sit on the legal-policy advisory board of another organization devoted to conservative activism, the Washington Legal Foundation, which refuses to disclose its financial backers but, according to records available elsewhere, is a recipient of funds from both the tobacco industry and the John M. Olin Foundation, an older and equally powerful counterpart

of the Bradley Foundation. Despite a few Democrats in its membership, the group has over the years defined legal issues on the right flank of the Republican Party, in much the same way that the American Civil Liberties Union has on the left flank of the Democratic Party. The advisory board is chaired by Frank Fahrenkopf, who served as the Republican National Committee chairman during the Reagan era and is representing the Party's interests in organizing Presidential debates this year. The Washington Legal Foundation was also one of Fiske's sharpest critics, long before he was appointed independent counsel. Indeed, the group played a large part in preventing him from being confirmed as Deputy Attorney General under Richard Thornburgh in the Bush Administration, spreading the word to conservatives in Congress that Fiske was a Rockefeller Republican and was too friendly with liberal groups. The charge was recycled by other conservatives before Fiske was ousted as independent counsel, in the summer of 1994.

Also serving on the Washington Legal Foundation's legal advisory board are Barbara Bracher, Republican counsel to the Senate hearings on Travelgate, and Bracher's fiancé, Theodore Olson, a prominent Washington attorney and one of Starr's closest friends. (Olson is also representing former Little Rock Municipal Court Judge David Hale, who has levelled the only specific allegations against Clinton in the ongoing trial of Arkansas Governor Jim Guy Tucker.) I asked Sam Dash about the propriety of Starr's continuing to be involved in this organization. Dash said that Starr told him he did not recall ever having attended an advisory-board meeting, and so does not regard it as a problem. Dash says that although Starr knows Bracher, he did not know of her role in the Washington Legal Foundation, nor did he realize that the foundation had been critical of Fiske: "I said to him he should think about it—because there can be an inference of just lending your name. But he hasn't been thinking about it."

At the same time, Starr continues to work for some of the largest and most active contributors to the Republican Party. Included in a recently published list of thirty-one clients he has repre-

SKETCHBOOK • BY WILLIAM STEIG
MOVERS AND SHAKERS





sented since being named independent counsel are two tobacco companies, Brown & Williamson and Philip Morris. He also represents Chiquita Brands International, whose chairman, Carl Lindner, is one of Senator Bob Dole's oldest and biggest supporters.

According to statistics compiled by Common Cause, the tobacco companies are spending millions of dollars in the Republican cause, and aligning themselves against Clinton, who has been aggressive in pursuing the regulation of nicotine as a drug. The tobacco industry increased its so-called "soft money" contributions to the Republican Party more than fourfold between 1995 and the previous off-election year, 1993, giving two million three hundred thousand dollars to Republicans last year, more than five times the amount it gave to Democrats. Starr, meanwhile, has been the counsel of record, representing cigarette manufacturers in the appeal of a ruling permitting millions of American smokers to join in a potentially ruinous class-action suit. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, Starr signed the briefs in the appeal and directed strategy for a group of lawyers from twelve firms representing the tobacco industry.

It can certainly be argued that any prominent Washington lawyer is likely to have clients involved in litigation with the federal government. But in the eyes of John Coale, an attorney who has opposed Starr in litigation involving the tobacco companies, the conflict is all

too real for a Republican independent counsel with power over a sitting Democratic President. "Nothing would thrill the tobacco industry more than to have a Republican President," Coale asserts. "So it's greatly in Starr's favor, and that of his clients, to have Clinton lose the election. When you add it all up, it reeks."

STARR'S activities have extended to one cause that was especially embarrassing to the President—and that gives Starr the dubious distinction of being the first independent counsel to have considered, prior to his appointment, supporting a suit against the subject of his investigation. In the summer of 1994, Starr was researching a possible amicus brief on the subject of Presidential immunity from civil suits, in support of Paula Corbin Jones's attempt to press her sexual-harassment claim against President Clinton. At the time, it was widely reported that Jones was sponsored in part by conservative critics of the President, who were helping to pay her legal bills and had introduced her to the press at a Washington event. Starr was approached about a brief by the Independent Women's Forum, an organization that bills itself as nonpartisan but has taken conservative stands on a number of issues, and also receives some funding from the Olin Foundation. Starr had been publicly outspoken in his support for Jones's contention that Clinton had no right to claim special immunity from a

civil suit while in office, and two weeks before his appointment the *Washington Post* reported that he would probably be filing a supporting brief. Starr had confirmed the story. But his involvement with the Independent Women's Forum was not widely known. His appointment as independent counsel intervened before a final decision to file the brief was made.

In the months before his appointment, Starr had been seriously considering a run for the

United States Senate as a Republican candidate from Virginia. He was then also serving as co-chairman of the Republican congressional campaign of a Virginia attorney, Kyle McSarrow, who was trying to defeat a Democratic incumbent. (McSarrow, who lost, is now serving as Bob Dole's deputy chief of staff.)

Because independent counsels are neither appointed by the President nor confirmed by the Senate, they are not subjected to scrutiny by the ample investigative staffs of the executive and legislative branches of the government. While Sam Dash points out that Starr's suitability for the job was properly an issue for the three-judge panel that appointed him, it remains unclear to what extent the panel knew of his political activities. John D. Butzner—a seventy-eight-year-old senior judge on the Fourth Circuit—said he felt that it was improper to comment publicly on the subject. Judge Butzner, the lone Democrat on the panel, also indicated that when his papers were made public fifty years hence the answer might be interesting. Another panel member, Judge Joseph T. Sneed, a Nixon appointee on the Ninth Circuit, would say only that he had confidence in Starr when they appointed him, and he has confidence in him still.

STARR has taken steps to assure the public of his evenhandedness. In addition to hiring Dash, at a salary of thirty-two hundred dollars a week, he

chose a Democrat to oversee the highly sensitive Washington end of his investigation: Mark Tuohey, a former president of the District of Columbia Bar Association. (In addition, Tuohey, unlike Starr—but like many of Starr's hires—had experience as a prosecutor.) Tuohey has since left the investigation, but he continues to admire Starr, about whom he says, "I was convinced he wasn't going to play it politically; otherwise, I wouldn't have gotten involved." He says Starr has set up an elaborate system in the office to insure that all major decisions are made by consensus, "in order to avoid mistakes." And he argues that so far the results have validated the investigation. "With eight indictments and nine pleas, clearly it has been merited. Clearly, there's conduct which has been criminal."

Despite Starr's safeguards, some mistakes have inevitably been made. One is Starr's belated acknowledgment that while he was investigating the Resolution Trust Corporation's supervision of Madison Guaranty, his law firm, Kirkland & Ellis, was being sued by the same agency. (The firm denied any wrongdoing, and eventually settled out of court for an estimated three hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars.) Of the overlapping legal action against his firm, which was first reported by Joe Conason and Murray Waas in *The Nation*, Starr told Dash that he did not know about it until March of 1995, seven months after he was appointed independent counsel. For its part, Kirkland & Ellis says that this suit "has been public knowledge since the time it was filed in open court in 1993 (more than a year before Judge Starr became independent counsel)." Moreover, when he did find out he offered to recuse himself from any dealings with the R.T.C., some-

thing that Dash deemed unnecessary. However, the question is why Starr, who is on the firm's management committee, did not know of the legal action, and why he did not make a more serious effort to find out about such direct and substantial conflicts.

NO one knows exactly where the Whitewater investigation will lead. Starr's scope is immense at this point. The Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals recently upheld his authority to investigate any federal crimes he comes across in the course of investigating the Clintons and their associates. Already, the investigation has resulted in a number of tangential charges against people not immediately involved in the Whitewater matter, such as Webster Hubbell, Hillary Clinton's former law partner and a former Associate Attorney General, who is serving a twenty-one-month sentence for bilking the Rose Law Firm and its clients. Charges are currently pending in three other cases: Arkansas Governor Jim Guy Tucker and James McDougal and his former wife, Susan, the Clintons' partners in the original Whitewater business deal, are facing an

array of fraud and conspiracy charges. Failing a pending appeal on Starr's right to bring the case, Tucker and his former attorney will face additional tax and fraud charges in another trial. And in the small town of Perryville, Arkansas, two bankers have been charged with falsifying bank records, allegedly to garner funds that were later donated to the campaign of then Governor Clinton. Clearly, Starr's staff hopes that these relatively marginal figures will, in the parlance of such prosecutions, "flip" and turn into state's witnesses against larger targets.

Investigators in both Washington and Arkansas are known to be homing in on the White House in general and Hillary Clinton in particular. Their focus is on whether the President's wife knowingly violated banking and tax laws in the couple's investment in the Whitewater Development Corporation, and whether she or any of her associates obstructed justice in an effort to cover up her actions. The prosecutors on Starr's staff are deadly serious about their endeavor, which one prosecutor compares in importance to Watergate. A top official with the investigation has described the odds in favor of



"I'm trying to eat lower on the food chain."

indicting Hillary Clinton as "at least fifty-fifty."

Whether Mrs. Clinton is charged or not—and Starr has hinted that his job may not be finished until after the Presidential election—the investigation already appears to be having an effect on the campaign. Starr's unprecedented and highly controversial decision to subpoena the First Lady before a Washington grand jury last January, following the mysterious reappearance in her private study of billing records that the counsel's office had been seeking for almost two years, has hurt her reputation, according to polls. Not surprisingly, White House officials, who point out that Mrs. Clinton had already been interviewed privately by Starr's staff twice before, and was available to do so again, see the subpoena as a stunt—as part of a show trial.

Those who know Starr's work warn against judging him prematurely. They mention that in 1987 he co-wrote the decision that strongly supported the First Amendment rights of investigative journalists in overturning a two-million-dollar judgment against the *Washington Post* in the libel suit brought by the former president of Mobil Oil. "I think we should take him as a guy who has strong political beliefs," Bob Shrum, a liberal Democratic speechwriter and a Kennedy family associate, who does not know Starr, says. "But one shouldn't assume that makes him irresponsible, or likely to bend the law to achieve a particular result."

But in Little Rock many are less willing to give Starr the benefit of the doubt. The first major test of Starr's legal success is just getting under way in the trial of Governor Tucker and the McDougals. Among members of the local bar, there is bafflement at Starr's tactics, including his use of David Hale, the former municipal court judge, who has pleaded guilty to felony charges, as his chief witness against Tucker, the McDougals, and, implicitly, the Clintons. "If Clinton were a crime boss, these facts might be O.K. But we're dealing with a sitting President, who has never been found guilty of any criminal activity—and he's being accused by people who have," Nate Coulter, a local trial lawyer and active Democrat who has counselled some individuals

THE SICK WIFE

The sick wife stayed in the car
while he bought a few groceries.
Not yet fifty,
she had learned what it's like
not to be able to button a button.

It was the middle of the day—
and so only mothers with small children
or retired couples
stepped through the muddy parking lot.

Dry cleaning swung and gleamed on hangers
in the cars of the prosperous.
How easily they moved—
with such freedom,
even the old and relatively infirm.

The windows began to steam up.
The cars on either side of her
pulled away so briskly
that it made her sick at heart.

—JANE KENYON

subpoenaed in the investigation, said to me. Hale's credibility, which was already deemed weak, suffered further last week when he reportedly admitted under cross-examination that he had seriously misled the federal judge who sentenced him. This opened Hale to accusations by defense lawyers that when he's under pressure he lies.

There are also stories about perceived prosecutorial excesses, such as Starr's staff questioning witnesses about Clinton's alleged extramarital affairs, and the attempt by an I.R.S. agent to serve the sixteen-year-old son of one of the investigation's targets with a subpoena at the boy's high school. "It was meant to intimidate," the youth's lawyer, David Williams, says. "Starr is out of line," he claims. "They come in here like Storm Troopers, take names, and kick ass." A Starr deputy has confirmed that an attempt was made to serve the boy in school, but he says it was a case of poor judgment on the part of the federal agent.

Another account of prosecutorial zeal concerns Sarah Hawkins, a one-time employee of Madison Guaranty Savings & Loan and a former bank

examiner who had started her own financial-consulting business. Hawkins was expert enough about the institution's books to be a valuable source for prosecutors. At first, she coöperated, meeting twice with federal investigators. But just before Christmas of 1994 she received a letter informing her that she was the "subject" of a criminal investigation. Prosecutors on Starr's staff suspected her of allowing property records to be falsified, to deceive bank examiners. When she received her "subject" letter from Starr's people, she told me she thought they must be kidding, but when she and her court-appointed attorney met with members of Starr's staff they were told that if Hawkins didn't plead guilty to a felony she would be indicted the following week on multiple counts of bank fraud.

But Hawkins, who is black and comes from the poorest patch of the Arkansas delta, believed that she was innocent. So, with the support of her family and her minister, she told her attorney that she refused to plead guilty to any crime. Over the next six months, prosecutors from Starr's staff called her lawyer regularly, threatening to

prosecute. Even before her name appeared in the newspapers as a subject, she says, her consulting business dried up, and her annual income soon fell from fifty thousand dollars to twenty thousand. "It was really frightening," she goes on. "Starr and his staff had just flooded the town, and they didn't let up once they got here. I did a whole lot of praying, and a whole lot of crying."

Last June, she says, prosecutors let her lawyer know that if she cooperated with their investigation she could plead guilty to a misdemeanor instead of a felony. "I said I'm not pleading guilty to anything," she recalls. Five more months went by, and last November she received a letter from the independent counsel's office telling her that it no longer believed it had the evidence on which to indict her on the bank-fraud charges, and offering her "use immunity" in exchange for her cooperation. By then, she told me, she was so disgusted that she refused to cooperate. But a month later, after her name appeared on a list of potential defense witnesses in the Tucker trial (although she had wanted no part on either side), she learned from Starr's staff that she was the subject of a new, unspecified criminal investigation. This became part of a public court session and then a story on the evening news.

Court transcripts show that prosecutors in Starr's office started investigating Hawkins again only because she had refused to cooperate with them. "When she refused to cooperate with us, we wanted to find out why and we started doing additional investigation," Starr's assistant, Ray Jahn, acknowledged in court last January. "And we discovered what we believe may be other criminal acts that she participated in."

Weeks later, Hawkins met again with members of Starr's staff, to find out about the new potential charges. This time, she and her attorney say, the prosecutors claimed they had been looking into possible conflict-of-interest charges stemming from her having worked on both sides of negotiations involving a single loan, first for the government and then for a private banking interest. Hawkins remembers the investigators' attitude toward her in the meeting as friendly and conciliatory; they praised

her work at Madison while indicating, as she understood it, that they had thus far found no evidence to warrant an indictment in the new investigation. But they still wanted her help.

Dash, upon hearing this story, initially described it as "vicious" and said that he hoped that it wasn't true. After checking with Starr's office in Little Rock, he said he was convinced that there had been no prosecutorial abuse, and that the new investigation into Hawkins preceded—and was unrelated to—her appearance as a potential witness for the defense. The prosecutors had notified Hawkins of the investigation, Dash explained, to avoid her unknowingly giving self-incriminating testimony. Moreover, according to Dash, if Hawkins believes she is off the hook she is wrong. She may still face charges resulting from conflicts of interest in her consulting work. Hawkins' attorney, Rick Holiman, who represented a co-defendant of James McDougal's in an earlier trial, excoriates Starr. "Usually, they say 'If you play ball we'll go easy,'" he says of prosecutors. "But here they're saying 'If you don't cooperate we'll dig something up on you.' That's called an abuse of power." Hawkins herself asks, "What possible good can come from all of this?"

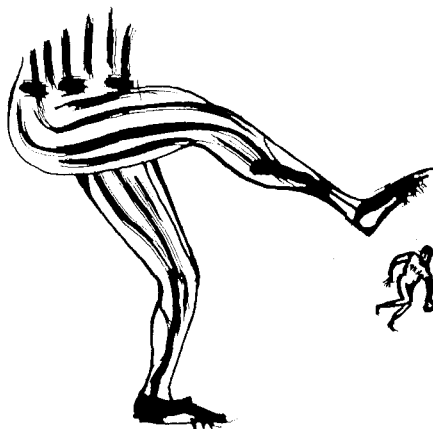
THE Whitewater investigation is taking place, inescapably, within a political context. And in that context the conflicts created by Starr's activities and associations, past and present, are clear—and cannot be dispelled by assertions, however well grounded, of his integrity and fair-mindedness.

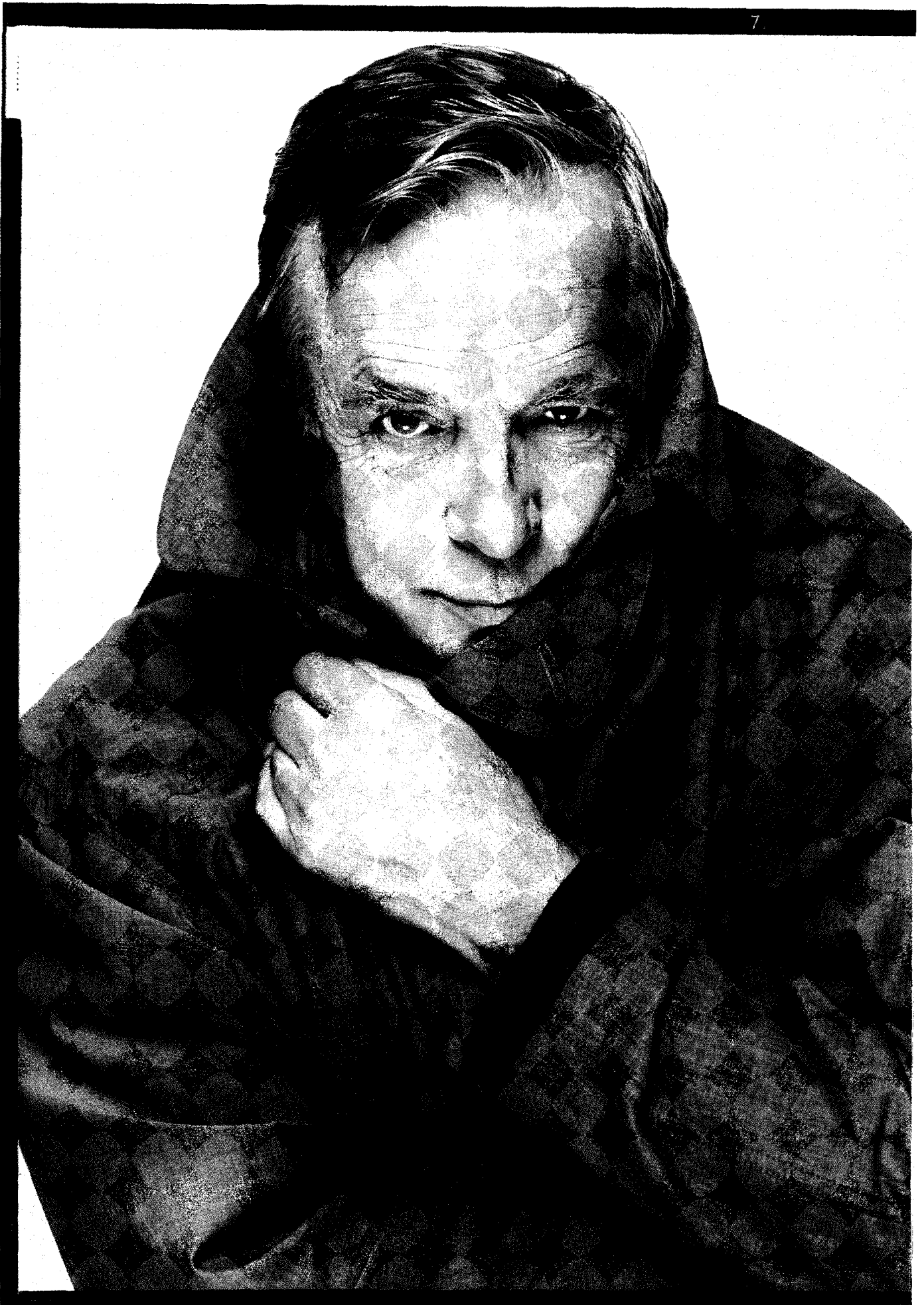
Starr may, of course, simply choose to write a judicious report neither charging nor exonerating the President or his

wife. If in fact he brings no charges against the Clintons, his political background may make his judgment all the more persuasive to most Americans. Lawrence Walsh, the independent counsel in the Iran-Contra affair, told me recently, "The most important test is whether you can come out and say no action needs to be taken. That's the hardest. So if people expect you to be hostile it adds to your credibility." But, Walsh noted, "it works the other way if you bring charges." In other words, given Starr's record, an outcome that damaged the Clintons would inevitably be regarded in many quarters as politically motivated—even if it wasn't.

It wouldn't much matter if Starr only had a past record as a Republican partisan, or only represented tobacco interests, or only served on the board of the occasional anti-Clinton organization in his spare time, or only had been involved in helping Paula Jones's lawsuit just days before his appointment, or only remained active in private practice while serving as independent counsel, or only cherished political ambitions incompatible with Clinton's. But when these things are piled on top of each other they begin to add up.

Inside the "bat cave," as people have taken to calling Starr's offices in west Little Rock, security is tight. The dark-brown blinds are drawn, and closed-circuit television cameras monitor the hallways. Because of his other commitments, Starr himself is said to be here at most a couple of days a week, but he's constantly on the telephone. It is clear that he and his staff feel beleaguered. Recently, the *Wall Street Journal's* editorial page, which has led the Whitewater charge, ran an op-ed piece attacking Starr's critics as cronies of the "Arkansas machine," and Debbie Gershmon, Starr's assistant and the office spokeswoman, was reportedly observed publicly embracing the author at the courthouse. The *Wall Street Journal* said later that its writer had no memory of this, but the alleged hug made the papers in Little Rock. In a town eager to believe that Starr's "independent" title is a misnomer, it was another indication that the man hired to investigate an appearance problem has a serious appearance problem of his own. ♦





ONWARD AND UPWARD WITH THE ARTS

ZEFFIRELLI'S REVENGE

What do Italy's far right and Charlotte Brontë have in common? Together, they have given a new twist to Franco Zeffirelli's eclectic career.

BY ANDREA LEE

ON a spring afternoon two years ago in the Sicilian city of Catania, the film and theatre director Franco Zeffirelli, with a small band of followers, was making a slow but not inconspicuous procession through the huge outdoor market known locally as the *Fer o Lun*. "Maestro! Maestro!" called fishmongers, costermongers, hawkers of meat, of housewares and clothes, leaning out of their stalls to shake his hand. Housewives shifted bulging shopping bags to get nearer the passing celebrity. Urchins milled, shouting in dialect. Above the striped awnings and market umbrellas flapping in the sea breeze rose the great Baroque Carmelite convent of Catania, built of blocks of lava from nearby Mt. Etna. The whole rumbustious scene resembled one of the overpopulated productions with which Zeffirelli has notoriously mobbed the Metropolitan Opera—a modern-dress "Cavalleria Rusticana." Instead, it was a different type of show business: politics. In between films and stage productions, the director was running for the seat of senator from Catania in the Italian parliament. The old, left-dominated political system was breaking up like pack ice, and out of nowhere a powerful right-wing force had been marshalled by the media magnate Silvio Berlusconi. In his bid to become Prime Minister, the billionaire had summoned up a new political party, Forza Italia. It was on the Forza Italia ticket that Zeffirelli, who is seventy-three and has been an outspoken rightist for the last forty years, was running for the Senate. What could be more appropriate, given the climate of change, than to make a candidate of an artist famous for being an obstreperous

outsider, a man whom the cultural establishment in his own country has always viewed as politically incorrect?

"*Cambieremo tutto!* We'll change everything!" In the used-clothing section of the market, Zeffirelli, addressing a woman with hennaed hair in front of a heap of worn fur coats, pronounced the liturgical political phrase like an actor putting his own stamp on an overworked line of Shakespeare. And the crowd, made up of Sicilians tempted to switch their vote from left to right, applauded. "Destroy the leftists!" shouted a man in a black jacket. "They're not leftists—they're rotten parasites!" Zeffirelli shot back.

He revelled in the jostling and noise with the rowdy good humor of an inveterate sports fan. He linked up with future constituents with the ease of one accustomed to dealing with hordes of extras and assistants on movie and stage sets. And he added to this the slightly self-conscious pleasure an aesthete takes in an authentic popular scene. Observing his energy, one could understand how directing films and theatrical productions might require the same sort of personality as running for office—a half-maniac nature that thrives on prolonged stress. Just now, though, he was looking relaxed, in a striped sports shirt, jeans, running shoes, and a dark-blue leather Trussardi jacket. His face, below hair of a carefully natural blond, still showed gleams of the extraordinary beauty he possessed fifty years ago, as an aspiring actor, when, among other roles, he played Dorian Gray. His forehead is broad and ingenuous, but his expression is mutable, switching in an instant from affable extroversion to waspish irritation to magisterial wrath, to blossom sud-

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD AVEDON
Franco Zeffirelli, London, September 24, 1994.



"I can't refill your prescription, Mrs. Rowley, but how about a frozen Daiquiri?"

denly into the deceptively cherubic grin of a naughty boy.

"Maestro!" Television cameras tracked him as he moved along, pressing hands, munching fava beans, patting babies' cheeks, sampling a raw sardine. Besides the clean-cut young Forza Italia volunteers, his entourage included a few less conventional old friends from local theatrical circles: one of them, a corpulent, enthusiastic matron in a dark dress, had become notorious decades earlier as Italy's first transsexual. The candidate stroked the curly hair of a vender at a potato stand and mugged for photographs between two tall boys in tight T-shirts as his assistants passed out invitations to a special Forza Italia Mass that Zeffirelli was sponsoring in the cathedral the next day, in honor of Catholic family values.

From the crowd a little girl in a plaid skirt ran up to him. "Maestro!" she said. "May I have an autograph, Maestro Fellini?"

Zeffirelli winced. "Fellini," he said in a quelling voice, "is dead." But then he smiled a candidate's smile, patted her cheek, and signed his own autograph.

ANYONE who has lived in Italy will have observed that Franco Zeffirelli is a peculiar public institution. He

is less a sacred monster than a sort of official national curmudgeon, a bellicose celebrity who is frequently and gleefully embroiled in life outside his *métier*. In the United States, England, France, and other countries where his name has been famous among operagoers since his first great late-fifties productions, featuring Callas and Sutherland, and among the general public since his 1968 bringing-Shakespeare-into-the-Aquarian-age film "Romeo and Juliet," he is known as a show-business superstar who puts on big, flashy operas and makes big, simplified films of classics. Any controversy attached to his name outside Italy has to do with the fact that critics don't much like his oversized approach whereas audiences generally do. In his latest film, "Jane Eyre," which opened in New York last week, Zeffirelli has shown unusual restraint: his version of Charlotte Brontë's masterpiece has a controlled dynamism.

In Italy, however, "Jane Eyre"—which opened there in February—has been overshadowed by the director's highly visible public persona and extracurricular activities. Indeed, in his own country his work is often ignored—it's hard even to find his films in video

stores—while Italian journalists love to report his pronouncements on sex, sports, religion, animal rights, and world affairs, in which he galvanizes even the slightest dispute with truculent energy. In 1991, *il fuocoso regista*—the fiery director, as the Italian press often refers to him—had to withdraw from the board of his beloved Florence football club after his public support of obnoxious behavior by Florentine football fans evoked a great outcry; later that year, he found himself accused by the Saudi Ambassador of "offending the entire Arab world" after a squabble with the Saudi government over censorship. In 1993, he annoyed traditionalists all over Italy by calling for an end to the Palio—the venerable horse race held every year in Siena—as a cruel institution. And even before he started campaigning for parliament

he outraged feminists—but didn't particularly surprise anyone—by declaring that he would impose the death penalty on women who had abortions.

Some saw his emergence as a candidate for Berlusconi's Forza Italia as the straightforward opportunism of a director making up to a media billionaire. Some of the money for "Jane Eyre" was obtained through a subsidiary of Fininvest, Berlusconi's vast financial empire, which recently has been clouded by the corruption scandals rife in Italy. Indeed, the project had come into being some two years earlier, when Zeffirelli met with the Fininvest official in charge of cinema. The fact is, however, that Zeffirelli has been a confirmed rightist since the fifties, and Forza Italia was completely in line with his vociferous dislike of the political left—a dislike that he says dates from his experiences as a partisan in the Second World War. He'd shown political ambitions before: in 1983, he ran for parliament in Florence on the middle-of-the-road Christian Democrat slate, and lost. But by early 1994 Italian voters, frustrated with two decades of government by a Socialist Party that, under Bettino Craxi, flaunted a style of life like that of Gilded

Age robber barons, were being drawn out of traditional paths by Berlusconi's new political party. Berlusconi promised miracles like a million jobs, bombarded Italy with an unprecedented television campaign, came up with a slogan—"Forza Italia!"—that sounded like a soccer cheer, and on Election Day, in March, his coalition triumphed with a landslide victory that was nothing short of a revolution, carrying the established left out of power, and changing the political allegiance of half the nation's youth from left to right. New faces were part of the bargain, and one of the new faces was Zeffirelli, assigned to Sicily, where he had often worked. Two days after his stroll through the Fer o Lun, Zeffirelli won in Catania, with sixty-three per cent of the vote to the leftist-coalition candidate's twenty-nine per cent.

Zeffirelli's new role as a senator for the flamboyant Italian neo-right hardly caused an eyebrow to be raised in the Italian cultural establishment, for there he had long been pigeonholed as a reactionary and condemned for the commercialism and middlebrow appeal of his films. "Zeffirelli? *Per carità!* Oh, please! We haven't sunk that low!" exclaimed the bespectacled young proprietor of a booth of "classic Italian" movie videos at last year's Turin Book Fair, on being asked whether he carried works by the director. The actor Giorgio Albertazzi, who has known Zeffirelli since both were teenagers in Florence, says, "In Italy there exists a clearly defined leftist culture that has always snubbed Zeffirelli. Perhaps he does let himself get carried away sometimes by an excess of orchestration, but they consider him someone from the circus."

I HAVE a difficult character. I'm vindictive—I don't pardon easily. And I've always said what I thought. Still, I'm very much loved in Italy, though not by the media, the official opinion, which has always detested me." Zeffirelli says this as we're eating lunch in the restaurant of Twickenham Studios, outside London,

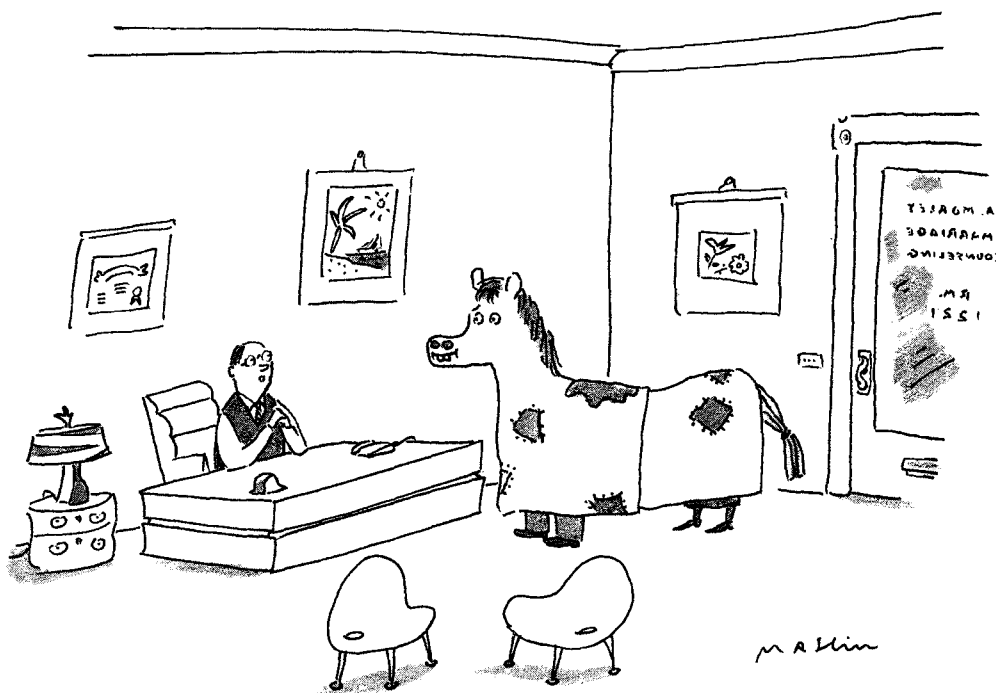
where he is shooting interior sequences for "Jane Eyre." He says it not defiantly but placidly, even complacently, in the manner of a former enfant terrible now at peace with himself and his own tics. The director has shed the Hollywood-style candidate's glow he wore in Catania; he is paler and plumper, needs a haircut, and has dark circles under his eyes. Earlier, on the set, I watched him chatting with twelve-year-old Anna Paquin, who plays the young Jane. Paquin, dressed in a severe gray institutional bonnet and gown, also displayed a high forehead: with their heads together, she and Zeffirelli gave the impression of two solemn children trading secrets.

We have got together to talk undisturbed, something that is almost impossible to do with Zeffirelli, who is famously busy and famously elusive for interviews. Our lunch, months in the planning, had been put off for two more days when unexpectedly he had to fly back to Rome to vote in the Senate on a financial measure. "We moved along some very big projects," he tells me now, in a weighty, satisfied tone. We are talking partly in Italian and partly in English, a language that in Zeffirelli's case is heavily accented but fluent and precise. As we eat, he is telling me about being a senator: he sensibly assigns oth-

ers to cover areas he is unfamiliar with, and tries to take charge of things with which he has direct experience—culture, historic preservation, education, and the environment, including, in particular, animal rights.

He goes on to talk about his relations with the media. "The media opinion of me has been created by those on the left who have always controlled that hegemony," he says. "For decades, I have been a man they've tried to block or oppose. Whereas in England and the U.S.A. they know who I am and respect me, in Italy I've hardly ever had a good review." He spears a potato and stares at it with mock ferocity, and it occurs to me that there is an agreeable element of self-parody in Zeffirelli which, in person, mitigates his excesses.

In Italy, he says, culture has been crushed by what he calls the *struttura massonica della sinistra*, the Masonic structure of the left—a kind of closed society that rewards its members and penalizes nonmembers. This leads, he says, to some absurd heroes: "How, for instance, could anyone take Umberto Eco seriously? Somebody like that, who will be forgotten tomorrow, and now he's at the top of the lists, because the cultural apparatus of the left—the publishing houses, publicity, the information ser-



"As children aren't an issue in this marriage, may I suggest that you consider staying together for the sake of the horse?"

vices—put him there. It's like the emperor in that story where the child says he has no clothes. Nobody has said it of Eco, because he stands on the correct side of the fence. In Italy, they have decided to annihilate conservative culture—it doesn't exist anymore. For us, things are completely polarized. Being on the right practically means being Fascist." He is silent for a minute. "Well, it doesn't matter," he continues. "I love my country anyway, and, in any case, my career is elsewhere."

We start to talk about "Jane Eyre," a publicity chore that Zeffirelli performs with good grace, displaying along the way a fair knowledge of English literature. He calls the novel epoch-making. "A very modern conception," he says. "The position of the woman with regard to the man is no longer that of romantic literature—she wants to be treated as an equal, and that's the big revolution of the novel. For women in literature, there is before 'Jane Eyre' and after 'Jane Eyre.' I looked everywhere for an actress to play Jane—even in America, though I thought she had to be European, because the story is European. Then I came upon Charlotte"—the Anglo-French actress Charlotte Gainsbourg,

who plays Jane. "She's intense, plain-faced, severe, spinsterish, hard, concedes nothing—a governess. Jane has a real personality that always defends her dignity. She's not afraid of anything, and she never lies."

DISCUSSING this thorny, idiosyncratic character has led us inevitably to talking about Zeffirelli himself. He, too, was an orphan, and seems to have grown up in a novel. Or perhaps an opera. ("Jane Eyre" could never be an opera," he declares. "Wuthering Heights," on the other hand, is pure opera. I wonder why Donizetti or someone of that period didn't write a score for it.") His early life, which has grown into a myth, and has been chronicled in dozens of articles and in his autobiography, certainly deserves a libretto. The illegitimate son of a Florentine merchant and his mistress, who was a fashion designer, he grew up in an atmosphere of drama and scandal. Appropriately, even the surname his mother bestowed on him—as an illegitimate child, he could not legally take her name—was an operatic reference: to the *zeffiretti*, or little breezes, mentioned in one of her favorite arias from "Cosi Fan Tutte." In all the ac-

counts, one dark, tumultuous scene follows another. There is the bedroom with the big double bed that he shared with his mother and where he watched her make love with his father during the latter's clandestine visits. There is the medieval street in front of the schoolyard, where he was followed by his father's wife, in veil and fur coat, hissing, "Bastardino—you little bastard!" There is his mother's slow death from tuberculosis, when she would cling to him in bed "as if trying to draw warmth and health from the being she had made."

"I lost my mother at the age at which a child has an enormous desire to be loved, and have always had since then *quest'ansia di amare*—this anxious desire to love, with always the fear that the thing I love will be taken away." He says this matter-of-factly, and, indeed, in spite of his easy gregariousness, there is about him a persistent air of solitude.

Having been adopted by a cousin after his mother's death, he entered upon an emotionally patchy yet stimulating upbringing in Florence, which in the twenties and thirties was still the Florence of E. M. Forster—a cultured provincial city with a lingering feeling of Renaissance tradition, and an established English colony.

Young Franco played soccer in the cloisters of a Dominican monastery where Savonarola had prayed, and where the cells had been decorated by Fra Angelico. From the Dominicans, among whom were many artistic and highly educated friars, he absorbed a curious mixture of Catholicism and high culture. He spent summers with his old wet nurse, in a village where peasants lived on the land in a manner unchanged since the Middle Ages, and he got his first taste of theatre from travelling storytellers who acted out tales straight from Boccaccio. Opera, drama, and cinema were in the air in Florence, which was host to international celebrities in the annual Maggio Musicale



"I'm taking out two acres of pecan trees and putting in a fifteen-thousand-square-foot colonic-irrigation facility."

THE SHIP POUNDING

Each morning I made my way among gangways, elevators, and nurses' pods to Jane's room to interrogate grave helpers who had tended her all night like the ship's massive engines kept its propellers turning. Week after week, I sat by her bed with black coffee and the *Globe*. The passengers on this voyage wore masks or cannulae or dangled devices that dripped chemicals into their wrists, but I believed that the ship travelled to a harbor of breakfast, work, and love. I wrote: "When the infusions are infused entirely, bone

marrow restored and lymphoblasts remitted, I will take my wife, as bald as Michael Jordan, home to our dog and day." Months later these words turn up among papers on my desk at home, as I listen to hear Jane call for help, or speak in delirium, waiting to make the agitated drive to Emergency again, for re-admission to the huge vessel that heaves water month after month, without leaving port, without moving a knot, without arrival or destination, its great engines pounding.

—DONALD HALL

festival, and Zeffirelli responded to this atmosphere by building miniature stages, where with puppets he acted out the fantasies of a lonely precocious child. And he laid the base for a lifelong Anglo-philism by reading Shakespeare with an elderly English tutor.

During the Second World War, Zeffirelli, who was then an architecture student at the University of Florence, joined the ranks of Italian partisans fighting in the rough country north of Florence. More dramatic images: winter months on the edge of starvation with peasants in the mountains; villages burned and levelled; bloody ambushes of Nazi motorcades; a gruesome view of a village street lined with bodies hanged with barbed wire. "The war left a mark on us, even in insignificant things," Zeffirelli says, gesturing with his fork. "I lived through famine, so now I still feel guilty about eating—guilty if I finish my food, guilty if I don't. Those years formed my politics. We met Russians who had escaped from concentration camps, and they told us about the horrors going on in Russia. I saw that Stalin was as bad as Hitler—that Nazism, Fascism, and Socialism were in essence the same."

At that time, the young man began to display a talent for survival, made up of a gift for acquaintance and preternatural good luck. His fair-haired good looks and a protean adaptability to

situations—what his political detractors later called opportunism—also helped. Caught in Naples during the first bombardments, he escaped death by a chance absence from his hotel; as a partisan, he was twice captured and released—once because of family connections and the second time because he struck the fancy of his captor. At the end of the war, he stumbled out of the crossfire between the Allies and the retreating Germans and into a battalion of Scots Guards, and they took him on as a guide and interpreter. An inimitable Zeffirelli touch is that he quickly found his way to organizing amateur theatricals for the battalion, with actors in drag.

Returning to civilian life, he abandoned architecture for the theatre, and very soon had the luckiest encounter of all, with Luchino Visconti. It is hard not to imagine the two as characters in an Oscar Wilde drama: the twenty-two-year-old Zeffirelli, at the height of his Dorian Gray beauty, and the brilliant, rapacious, aristocratic Visconti, a sort of Continental Sir Henry Wotton and, at forty, one of the most famous stage and cinema directors of Europe. They met in 1946 in Florence, where Visconti was directing the stage version of "Tobacco Road" and Zeffirelli was painting scenery for it. That was the opening of the crucial collaboration of Zeffirelli's life, an artistic and sentimental relationship that

would be equalled in intensity only by his passionate friendship with Maria Callas. It also marked an immense step up in the world.

"Visconti was the Ideal Man—beautiful, grand, generous," Zeffirelli remarked in a recent interview. "I was dazzled by his intellectual and artistic splendor, and I loved him." The older man was also capricious, domineering, and cruel: he once humiliated Zeffirelli by allowing him to be arrested along with the household servants after a robbery. Still, there was no doubt that he fostered the talent of his young discovery. During nearly nine years that the two spent together, Zeffirelli emerged from a provincial life of theatrical assistants' jobs and bit parts into a cultural mainstream filled with the major artistic figures of his time. Living with Visconti in a vast, antique-filled villa on the Via Salaria in Rome, Zeffirelli found himself part of a moving salon that included Rossellini, Antonioni, Ingrid Bergman, and any great writer, actor, or director who happened to be in Rome. Through Visconti, he began lifelong friendships with Coco Chanel, Tennessee Williams, and Anna Magnani.

Received initially as another of Visconti's innumerable pretty-boy protégés, Zeffirelli surprised everyone by making his own career and eventually moving on. In Visconti, who divided his talents between cinema, opera, and theatre, Zeffirelli had an example of the restless eclecticism that in time became his own trademark. He worked with Visconti's legendary Morelli-Stoppa theatrical company, and he absorbed Visconti's penchant for painstakingly detailed background research and his habit of coaching actors by demonstrating each role, line by line. The point at which Zeffirelli emphatically resisted his mentor's influence was politics. Visconti, the aristocrat, was an enthusiastic parlor Marxist.

"After the war, I witnessed the blind adherence of artists and intellectuals to the *grande cenacolo*—the great feast—of Communism, and I rejected it," Zeffirelli says, finishing his coffee and lighting a cigarette. "It was one of the reasons for the definitive division between me and my great maestro, Visconti, whom I loved so much. I broke off with him, after years of affection, of work with him, largely for ideological rea-



sons. Like Jane Eyre, I said, 'I can't love you if I don't respect you.' In those circumstances, I wasn't free to speak my mind." He pauses for a minute and narrows his eyes. "And one begins to think, What, keep silent because you can't offend his friends, who will finance the film? All that leftist politics is simply a question of vested interests, low compromises, your ethics and conscience on sale." He makes this last declaration with such complete, mesmerizing conviction that I immediately abandon any idea of remarking that this is what some people in Italy say about his politicking with Berlusconi.

ZEFFIRELLI burst into prominence in the fifties first as a scenographer and then as a director, producing operas at La Scala that rivalled those of his former companion. But the sixties were his decade *mirabilis*. A curriculum of his career from 1958 on displays a bewildering counterpoint of leaps between opera, stage, and cinema productions, in Italy, England, France, and America. The scale is suddenly titanic: a Covent Gar-

den "Lucia di Lammermoor" (1959) with a débutante Joan Sutherland; a "Romeo and Juliet" (1960) at the Old Vic; an ambitious flop of an "Othello" (1961), with John Gielgud, at Stratford; "Tosca" at Covent Garden and "Norma" at the Paris Opéra, both with Maria Callas, in 1964; the Burton-Taylor "Taming of the Shrew" (1967); the film "Romeo and Juliet" (1968). A style evolved: scenes bursting with crowds and a rococo exuberance of detail that blended Visconti's sort of meticulous research with Hollywood-style spectacle; an emphasis on youth; an increasing search for broad audience appeal. The Old Vic "Romeo and Juliet" displayed all three elements, shattering canons with its disconcerting logic of presenting two realistically amorous young people played by young actors (John Stride and Judi Dench) in a plausible historical setting. Romeo, his hormones in tumult, swarmed up a tree to get to Juliet, and Kenneth Tynan, in an *Observer* review that once and for all established Zeffirelli's reputation outside Italy, called the production "a revelation, even,

perhaps a revolution." Revolution was top currency, and Zeffirelli, with his first Shakespeare, which was his first production in English, crossed over not only the language line but also the audience line, attracting spectators who would otherwise never have gone to the theatre. The production ran for years at the Old Vic and in New York, and the theatres were filled with laughing, crying long-haired kids.

The film "Romeo and Juliet," produced eight years later, was more of the same: everyone who was an adolescent at the end of the sixties remembers Leonard Whiting and Olivia Hussey, in their gorgeous immaturity, reciting their simplified lines in a production that became an icon for contemporary romance and whose tone suggested that Shakespeare was a grand old guy who understood teen-age rebellion. "Franco worships youth," Visconti remarked to a friend around that time. "He's quite capable of producing a 'King Lear' with a twenty-year-old Lear."

Zeffirelli's personal life was then dominated by his friendship with another sixties icon, Maria Callas. He had met her through Visconti in the fifties and had conceived what was almost a romantic passion for her, perhaps because her tragic aura and her personal vicissitudes evoked his early life. A photograph exists that was taken in 1958, moments after a performance of Zeffirelli's landmark Dallas "Traviata," with Callas: the photograph shows the two of them shining with triumphant youth and beauty, and looking eerily like fraternal twins. They remained close through her first great performances, then through the ups and downs of her muddled relationship with Onassis, until her death. Zeffirelli talks about Callas—using the same possessive tone he uses for Visconti—in almost every interview he gives, and he has announced that his next film will be about her life.

"The question is how to recount in an unusual, gentle, respectful manner the life of this woman who was so good, who was the victim of the people around her, who always had to defend herself from everybody," he tells me during our lunch. "I knew her so well. A woman capable of extraordinary impulses, full of instinct, talent. Of course, she became a tigress for the mass media, but she never

made a scene without a motive. She changed the face of opera, and then came the day when the voice wasn't there anymore. The film could take off from that point."

He orders a second coffee, and we embark on a conversation about love, human and divine—not surprisingly, for love is a favorite subject of Zeffirelli's. His prickly, worldly nature is tempered by a fundamentalist Catholic faith. A follower of the charismatic Padre Pio, he is also an outspoken supporter of the Vatican, and the list of his works includes television films of a canonization and of the papal ceremony of the Opening of the Sacred Door of St. Peter's. He dates his religious awareness from 1969, when, driving with his friend Gina Lollobrigida to a soccer match in Florence, he was involved in a serious car accident that shattered his face. During the long, painful period of surgery and convalescence that followed, he underwent a reawakening of faith that made him determined to include Christian principles in his life and work. (From a distance, however, this experience has the typical Zeffirelli edge of glamour. Who else would have found God as the result of a ride with Gina Lollobrigida in a Rolls-Royce?) His 1971 film about St. Francis, "Brother Sun and Sister Moon"—a resounding critical flop that has become a cult film in Catholic countries like the Philippines and Brazil—is a direct result of this determination, as was his ambitious 1977 five-part television film "The Life of Jesus," which is broadcast in Italy each Easter in conjunction with television coverage of the Pope's Via Crucis and has broken viewer records around the world.

THE restaurant at Twickenham Studios is nearly empty, but we stay on at our table talking. Since the death, in 1968, of the cousin who brought him up, Zeffirelli has been without close relatives. And since Visconti there has been no outward sign in his life of an important, enduring relationship. He divides his time between a house he has on the Appia Antica, in Rome; a magnificent eighteenth-century villa

he owns in Positano; and wherever he happens to be working, surrounded by an entourage of longtime assistants who have grown into a sort of family. His true love, clearly, is his dogs—five or six Jack Russell terriers, whom he spoils extravagantly; tales circulate of his punctuating the conversation at a dinner party by picking fleas off his pets.

He continues to talk about love and religion. "Because of what I believe, I haven't ever made violent films," he says. "They fill me with resentment and disapproval. I think, for example, that Mr. Tarantino is criminal. It makes me angry to see people with talent making films that are violent and brutal—as if there were no spiritual side to man, as if we were back in the Stone Age, as if man had made no progress. I don't want to sound like a moralist, for pity's sake, but—in the name of improving culture!"

Those last words are suggestive. They cause one to reflect on Zeffirelli's unvarying tendency throughout his career toward communication on a scale so broad that in a curious fashion it borders on proselytizing. One unconscious impulse that seems to govern what he creates is a vague vision of the need for a kind of social progress through art—a moral obligation to dif-

fuse beauty to the crowd which would not seem amiss to his detested Marxists or Fascists, or even to the television magnate Berlusconi. Zeffirelli's career is one that received its imprint in the sixties, a period in which art, like sex and fashion, tended toward accessibility, as elitist enclosures and traditional limitations were battered to the ground. He has remained the doyen of the accessible. "I have always been a popularizer," he wrote in his autobiography.

Zeffirelli lights a last cigarette. "At this age," he says, "I want to work, *e basta*—and that's it. For me, this is a moment full of harmony. I don't intend to retire. It's better to end up like Huston, who is my idol, and who died at eighty-one on the set. If I don't work, what will I do? Gianni Agnelli called me the other day and asked 'What are you doing these days—still working?' and I said, 'My dear fellow, if you don't work, what is there to do in life?'"

I TELEPHONE Zeffirelli at his house in Rome one evening soon after he has returned from a press junket for "Jane Eyre" in New York. His voice is full of elation as he describes the enthusiastic reception of the previews of what some people are already calling his greatest film since



"Do you mind?"





"Romeo and Juliet." In Italy, on the other hand, it is the old story: the reviews that attended "Jane Eyre" on its February release were all excellent, but they were delivered, as he puts it, "*a bocca storta*"—literally, "with a crooked mouth," which is to say with grudging praise. He makes exasperated noises when I tell him I have seen several Italian reviews that described him somewhat snidely as "an aesthete," and some others that hinted that much of his creativity derives from his onetime maestro, Visconti. "Eternal snipes and misquotes," he says. "They call me a Fascist because I'm anti-Communist, and they link me up with Pat Buchanan because I'm anti-abortion—as if I could help having my own strong personal opinions. I've even been accused of being an anti-Semite—I, who have received an honorary degree from the University of Tel Aviv! In the articles about 'Jane Eyre' I've been quoted as saying that William Hurt—who plays Rochester—"was impossible to work with. What I actually said was that Hurt is a very difficult man with an almost fanatical seriousness about his craft—who pushed me to do my own best work." He pauses for a minute, apparently to reflect. "People have said that one of the best things about my 'Jane Eyre' is that—for me—it is restrained. What re-

straint there is due to Hurt. He helped me to resist my normal tendency toward"—he pauses again, and his voice grows softer and more thoughtful—"embellishment."

A chorus of barking dogs interrupts us, and he shouts at them with paternal wrath, then goes on to talk about his schedule for the next few months: a "Coronation of Poppea" in Rome; a "Pagliacci" with Plácido Domingo in Las Vegas; an "Aida" in Tokyo. After some hesitation, he has decided to run for a second term in the Senate, and that means more campaigning. It would have been understandable if he had decided not to run, since over the last two years the political leadership in Italy has turned into a morass of shifting right-left factions that even many Italians can't follow. "I'm sorry to say it, but I'm fed up with Italy," he says. "Oh, I'll go on living here, because I have my house, my dogs, but my world, my destiny, is England and America. Italy is in the hands of a gang of scoundrels. And I have to ask myself why I am wasting time with this *paese ingrata*—this ungrateful country."

His voice over the telephone has risen and intensified in ardor as if he were about to break into an aria—"O *paese ingrata*!" Whatever the subject, Zeffirelli's most evident trait is the operatic one that he himself has just acknowledged: embellishment, on a grand scale. When we say good night, I reflect that I've come to enjoy his effusions, but the image that remains most appealing is of a quite different Zeffirelli, perhaps the essential one. The evening after our lunch in London, I dropped by the small house he rents in Kensington, to pick up some press clippings he'd promised me. He rose from a table where he had been writing, his face wan with tiredness but wearing the expression of complete contentment that children have when they are staying up too late. "It all begins here," he said, motioning toward the table, which, covered with sketches and notes, had a look of benign chaos. It was so rare to see him by himself, and quiet, that I took a good look. As my taxi pulled away, I glimpsed him for a second in the doorway, the lighted room behind him throwing his figure into sharp relief: it was as if he were standing alone on a very small stage. ♦

LEVINE'S 25TH

For a quarter of a century, one item in the Met's décor has stayed the same: that bush of hair between us and the middle of the stage. Where in a concert hall the conductor seems to be turned away from us, in the theatre he (or she) is turned with us, our first representative. James Levine has played that part in more than fifteen hundred performances—and he will again on April 27th, at an all-star gala at the Met in honor of his anniversary. His power over musicians, singers, repertory, and production values couldn't have become legendary if it hadn't been based on the power to carry the audience with him. The autocrat is, first of all, a tribune.

Drawing by Robert Risko

FICTION

THE NIGHT IN QUESTION

BY TOBIAS WOLFF



RANCES had come to her brother's apartment to hold his hand over a disappointment in love, but Frank ate his way through half the cherry pie she'd brought him and barely mentioned the woman. He was in an exalted state over a sermon he'd heard that afternoon. Dr. Violet had outdone himself, Frank said. This was his best; this was the gold standard. Frank wanted to repeat it to Frances, the way he used to act out movie scenes for her when they were young.

"Gotta run, Franky."

"It's not that long," Frank said. "Five minutes. Ten—at the outside."

Three years earlier he had driven Frances's car into a highway abutment and almost died, then almost died again, in detox, of a grand-mal seizure. Now he wanted to preach sermons at her. She supposed she was grateful. She said she'd give him ten minutes.

It was a muggy night, but as always Frank wore a long-sleeved shirt to hide the weird tattoos he woke up with one morning when he was stationed in Manila. The shirt was white, starched and crisply ironed. The tie he'd worn to church was still cinched up hard under his prominent Adam's apple. A big man in a small room, he paced in front of the couch as he gathered himself to speak. He favored his left leg, whose knee had been shattered in the crash; every time his right foot came down, the dishes clinked in the cupboards.

"O.K., here goes," he said. "I'll have to fill in here and there, but I've got most of it." He continued to walk, slowly, deliberately, hands behind his back, head bent at an angle that suggested meditation. "My dear friends," he said, "you may have read in the paper not long ago of a man of our state, a parent like many of yourselves here today . . . but a parent with a terrible choice to make. His name is Mike Bolling. He's a railroad man, Mike, a

switchman, been with the railroad ever since he finished high school, same as his father and grandfather before him. He and Janice've been married ten years now. They were hoping for a whole houseful of kids, but the Lord decided to give them one instead, a very special one. That was nine years ago. Benny, they named him—after Janice's father. He died when she was just a youngster, but she remembered his big lopsided grin and the way he threw back his head when he laughed, and she was hoping some of her dad's spirit would rub off on his name. Well, it turned out she got all the spirit she could handle, and then some.

"Benny. He came out in high gear and never shifted down. Mike liked to say you could run a train off him, the energy he had. Good student, natural athlete, but his big thing was mechanics. One of those boys, you put him in the same room with a clock and he's got it in pieces before you can turn around. By the time he was in second grade he could put the clocks back together, not to mention the vacuum cleaner and the TV and the engine of Mike's old lawnmower."

This didn't sound like Frank. Frank was plain in his speech, neither formal nor folksy, so spare and sometimes harsh that his jokes sounded like challenges, or insults. Frances was about the only one who got them. This tone was putting her on edge. Something terrible was going to happen in the story, something Frances would regret having heard. She knew that. But she didn't stop him. Frank was her little brother, and she would deny him nothing.

When Frank was still a baby, not even walking yet, Frank Senior, their father, had set out to teach him the meaning of the word "no." At dinner he'd dangle his wristwatch before Frank's eyes, then say "No!" and jerk it back just as Frank grabbed for it. When Frank persisted, Frank Senior would slap his hand until he was howling with fury and desire. This happened night after night. Frank would not take the lesson to heart; as soon as the watch was offered, he snatched at it. Frances followed her mother's example

and said nothing. She was eight years old, and while she feared her father's attention she also missed it, and resented Frank's obstinacy and the disturbance it caused. Why couldn't he learn? Then her father slapped Frank's face. This was on New Year's Eve. Frances still remembered the stupid tasselled hats they were all wearing when her father slapped her baby brother. In the void of time after the slap there was no sound but the long rush of air into Frank's lungs as, red-faced, twisting in his chair, he gathered himself to scream. Frank Senior lowered his head. Frances saw that he'd surprised himself and was afraid of what would follow. She looked at her mother, whose eyes were closed. In later years Frances tried to think of a moment when their lives might have turned by even a degree, turned and gone some other way, and she always came back to this instant when her father knew the wrong he had done, was shaken and open to rebuke. What might have happened if her mother had come flying out of her chair and stood over him and told him to stop, now and forever? Or if she had only looked at him, confirming his shame? But her eyes were closed, and stayed closed until Frank blasted them with his despair and Frank Senior left the room. As Frances knew even then, her mother could not allow herself to see what she had no strength to oppose. Her heart was bad. Three years later she reached for a bottle of ammonia, said "Oh," sat down on the floor and died.

Frances did oppose her father. In defiance of his orders, she brought food to Frank's room when he was banished, stood up for him and told him he was right to stand up for himself. Frank Senior had decided that his son needed to be broken, and Frank would not break. He went after everything his father said no to, with Frances egging him on and mothering him when he got caught. In time, their father ceased to give reasons for his displeasure. As his silence grew heavier, so did his hand. One night Frances grabbed her father's belt as he started after Frank, and when he flung her

aside Frank head-rammed him in the stomach. Frances jumped on her father's back and the three of them crashed around the room, and when it was over Frances was flat on the floor with a split lip and a ringing sound in her ear, laughing like a madwoman. Frank was crying. That was the first time.

Frank Senior said no to his son in everything, and Frances would say no to him in nothing. Frank was aware of her reluctance and learned to exploit it, most shamelessly in the months before his accident. He'd invaded her home, caused her trouble at work, nearly destroyed her marriage. To this day, her husband had not forgiven Frances for what he called her complicity in that nightmare. But her husband had never been thrown across a room, or kicked, or slammed head first into a door. No one had ever spoken to him as her father had spoken to Frank. He did not understand what it was to be helpless and alone. No one should be alone in this world. Everyone should have someone who kept faith, no matter what, all the way.

"ON the night in question," Frank said, "Mike's foreman called up and asked him to take another fellow's shift at the drawbridge station where he'd been working. A Monday night it was, mid-January, bitter cold. Janice was at a PTA meeting when Mike got the call, so he had no choice but to bring Benny along with him. It was against the rules, strictly speaking, but he needed the overtime and he'd done it before, more than once. Nobody ever said anything. Benny always behaved himself, and it was a good chance for him and Mike to buddy up, batch it a little. They'd talk and kid around, heat up some franks, then Mike would set Benny up with a sleeping bag and air mattress. A regular adventure.

"A bitter night, like I said. There was a furnace at the station, but it wasn't working. The guy Mike relieved had on his parka and a pair of mittens. Mike ribbed him about it, but pretty soon he and Benny put their own hats and gloves back on. Mike brewed up some hot chocolate, and they played gin rummy, or tried to—it's not that easy with gloves on. But they weren't thinking about winning or losing. It was good enough just being together, the two of them, with the cold wind blowing up against the windows. Father and son: what could be better than

that? Then Mike had to raise the bridge for a couple boats, and things got pretty tense because one of them steered too close to the bank and almost ran aground. The skipper had to reverse engines and go back downriver and take another turn at it. The whole business went on a lot longer than it should have, and by the time the second boat got clear Mike was running way behind schedule and under pressure to get the bridge down for the express train out of Portland. That was when he noticed Benny was missing."

Frank stopped by the window and looked out in an unseeing way. He seemed to be contemplating whether to go on. But then he turned away from the window and started in again, and Frances understood that this little moment of reflection was just another part of the sermon.

"Mike calls Benny's name. No answer. He calls him again, and he doesn't spare the volume. You have to understand the position Mike is in. He has to get the bridge down for that train and he's got just about enough time to do it. He doesn't know where Benny is, but he has a pretty good idea. Just where he isn't supposed to be. Down below, in the engine room.

"The engine room. The mill, as Mike and the other operators call it. You can imagine the kind of power that's needed to raise and lower a drawbridge, aside from the engine itself—all the winches and levers, pulleys and axles and wheels and so on. Massive machinery. Gigantic screws turning everywhere, gears with teeth like file cabinets. They've got catwalks and little crawlways through the works for the mechanics, but nobody goes down there unless they know what they're doing. You have to know what you're doing. You have to know exactly where to put your feet, and you've got to keep your hands in close and wear all the right clothes. And even if you know what you're doing, you never go down there when the bridge is being moved. Never. There's just too much going on, too many ways of getting snagged and pulled into the works. Mike has told Benny a hundred times, stay out of the mill. That's the iron rule when Benny comes out to the station. But Mike made the mistake of taking him down for a quick look one day when the engine was being serviced, and he saw how Benny lit up at the sight of all that steel, all that machinery. Benny was just dying to get his hands on those wheels

and gears, see how everything fit together. Mike could feel it pulling at Benny like a big magnet. He always kept a close eye on him after that, until this one night, when he got distracted. And now Benny's down in there. Mike knows it as sure as he knows his own name."

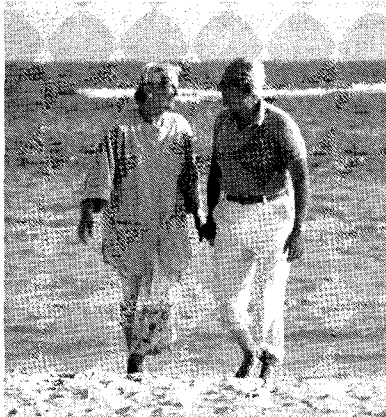
Frances said, "I don't want to hear this story."

Frank gave no sign that he'd heard her. She was going to say something else, but made a sour face and let him go on.

"To get to the engine room, Mike would have to go through the passageway to the back of the station and either wait for the elevator or climb down the emergency ladder. He doesn't have time to do the one or the other. He doesn't have time for anything but lowering the bridge, and just barely enough time for that. He's got to get that bridge down now or the train is going into the river with everyone on board. This is the position he's in; this is the choice he has to make. His son, his Benjamin, or the people on that train.

"Now, let's take a minute to think about the people on that train. Mike's never met any of them, but he's lived long enough to know what they're like. They're like the rest of us. There are some who know the Lord, and love their neighbors, and do right by them, and live in the light. And there are the others. On this train are men who whisper over cunning papers and take from the widow even her mean portion. On this train is the man whose factories kill and maim his workers. There are thieves on this train, and liars, and hypocrites. There is the man whose wife is not enough for him, who cannot be happy until he possesses every woman who walks the earth. There is the false witness. There is the bribe-taker. There is the woman who abandons her husband and children for her own pleasure. There is the seller of spoiled goods, the coward, and the usurer, and there is the man who lives for his drug, who will do anything for that false promise—steal from those who give him work, from his friends, his family, yes, even from his own family, scheming for their pity, borrowing in bad faith, breaking into their very homes. All these are on the train, awake and hungry as wolves, and also on the train are the sleepers, the sleepers with open eyes who sleepwalk through their days, neither doing evil nor resisting it, like soldiers who lie down as if dead and will not join the battle, not for their cities and homes, not

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even for their own wives and children. For such people, how can Mike give up his own son, his Benjamin, who is guilty of nothing?

"He can't. Of course he can't, not on his own, anyway. But Mike isn't on his own. He knows what we all know, even when we try to forget it: we are never alone, ever. We are in our Father's presence in the light of day and in the dark of night, even in that darkness where we run from Him, hiding our faces like fearful children. He will not leave us. No. Though we lock every window and bar every door, still He will enter. Though we empty our hearts and turn them to stone, yet shall He make His home there.

"He will not leave us alone. He is with all of you, as He is with me. He is with Mike, and also with the bribe-taker on the train, and the woman who needs her friend's husband, and the man who needs a drink. He knows their needs better than they do. He knows that what they truly need is Him, and though they flee His voice He never stops telling them that He is there. And at this moment, when Mike has nowhere to hide and nothing left to tell himself, then he can hear, and he knows that he is not alone, and he knows what it is that he must do. It has been done before, even by Him who speaks, the Father of All, who gave His own son, His beloved, that others might be saved."

"No!" Frances said.

Frank stopped and looked at Frances as if he couldn't remember who she was.

"That's it," she said. "That's my quota of holiness for the year."

"But there's more."

"I know, I can see it coming. The guy kills his kid, right? I have to tell you, Frank, that's a crummy story. What're we

supposed to get from a story like that—we should kill our own kid to save some stranger?"

"There's more to it than that."

"O.K., then, make it a trainload of strangers, make it *ten* trainloads of strangers. I should do this because the so-called Father of All did it? Is that the point? How do people think up stuff like this, anyway? It's an awful story."

"It's true."

"True? Franky. Please, you're not a moron."

"Dr. Violet knows a man who was on that train."

"I'll just bet he does. Let me guess." Frances screwed her eyes shut, then popped them open. "The drug addict! Yes, and he reformed afterward and worked with street kids in Brazil and showed everybody that Mike's sacrifice was not in vain. Is that how it goes?"

"You're missing the point, Frances. It isn't about that. Let me finish."

"No. It's a terrible story, Frank. People don't act like that. I sure as hell wouldn't."

"You haven't been asked. He doesn't ask us to do what we can't do."

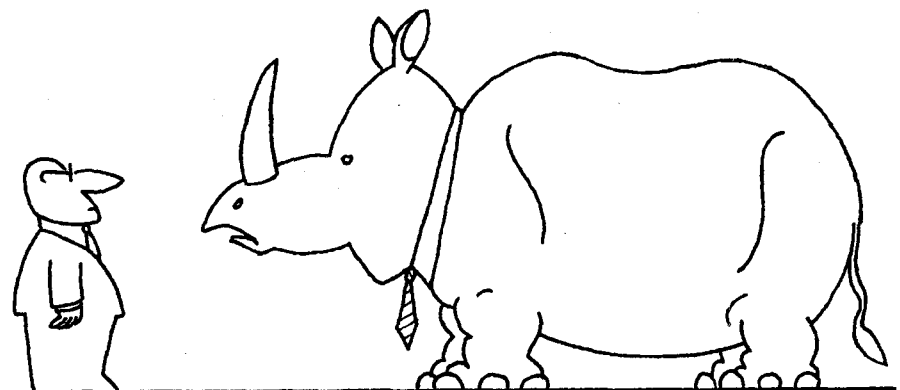
"I don't care what He asks. Where'd you learn to talk like that, anyway? You don't even sound like yourself."

"I had to change. I had to change the way I thought about things. Maybe I sound a little different, too."

"Yeah, well, you sounded better when you were drunk."

Frank seemed about to say something, but didn't. He backed up a step and lowered himself into a hideous plaid La-Z-Boy left behind by the previous tenant. It was stuck in the upright position.

"I don't care if the Almighty poked a gun in my ear, I would never do that," Frances said. "Not in a million years."



C. Baranetti

"Everybody else has health coverage."

Neither would you. Honest, now, little brother, would you grind me up if I was the one down in the mill, would you push the Francesburger button?"

"It isn't a choice I have to make."

"Yeah, yeah, I know. But say you did."

"I don't. He doesn't hold guns to our heads."

"Oh, really? What about Hell, huh? What do you call that? But so what. Screw Hell, I don't care about Hell. Do I get crunched or not?"

"Don't put me to the test, Frances. It's not your place."

"I'm down in the mill, Frank. I'm stuck in the gears and here comes the train with Mother Teresa and five hundred assholes on board, *whoo whoo, whoo whoo*. Who, Frank, who? Who's it going to be?"

Frances wanted to laugh. Glumly erect in the chair, hands gripping the armrests, Frank looked like he was about to take off into a hurricane. But she kept that little reflection to herself. Frank was thinking, and she had to let him. She knew what his answer would be—in the end there could be no other answer—but he couldn't just say *She's my sister* and let it go at that. No, he'd have to noodle up some righteous, high-sounding reasons for choosing her. And maybe he wouldn't, at first, maybe he'd chicken out and come up with the Bible-school answer. Frances was ready for that, she was up for a fight; she could bring him around. Frances didn't mind a fight, and she especially didn't mind fighting for her brother. For her brother she'd fought neighborhood punks, snotty teachers and unappreciative coaches, loan sharks, landlords, bouncers. From the time she was a scabby-kneed girl she'd taken on her own father, and if push came to shove she'd take on the Father of All, that incomprehensible bully. She was ready. It would be like old times, the two of them waiting in her room upstairs while Frank Senior worked himself into a rage below, muttering, slamming doors, stinking up the house with the cigars he puffed when he was on a tear. She remembered it all—the tremor in her legs, the hammering pulse in her neck as the smell of smoke grew stronger. She could still taste that smoke and hear her father's steps on the stairs, Frank panting beside her, moving closer, his voice whispering her name and her own voice answering as fear gave way to ferocity and unaccountable joy, *It's O.K., Franky. I'm here.* ♦

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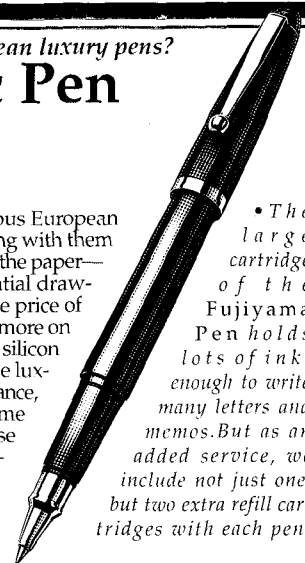
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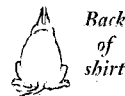
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SHIRLEY TEMPLE REGINA

How a happy princess became the beleaguered Queen.

BY JOHN UPDIKE

THE marital and romantic derelictions of her children and their spouses have made Queen Elizabeth II interesting in a way she was not before: she has been, to judge by the results, a faulty mother, and has proved, in these recent scabrous years, inexperienced in the contemporary art of damage control. Her oldest son, the Prince of Wales and heir apparent to the throne, and her two daughters-in-law, the former Lady Diana Spencer and the former Sarah Ferguson, have fed the tawdriest and most maudlin appetites of tabloid journalism with royal tidbits aplenty and, under the merciless media glare, have brought the very idea of monarchy into disrepute. Of course, it has been in disrepute before—one does not have to go back to Ethelred the Unready to find slow, murderous, self-indulgent, insane, and heartily disliked kings—but, as the divine aura around the throne dims and cost-cutters thrive in this era of global competition, scandal becomes excitingly perilous.

The present admirable and esteemed monarch became queen, of course, because of a scandal. When Princess Elizabeth Alexandra Mary of York was born—on April 21, 1926, by cesarean section, in a vanished Mayfair house now commemorated by a plaque—she was third in line for the throne occupied by her grandfather George V. But the odds were high that she would be displaced. Her uncle David, first in line, was nearly certain to marry and have children, and her mother, née Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, was only twenty-five and quite likely to present her husband, David's younger brother Albert, with a male heir. But, as it turned out, David, still a bachelor, abdicated the throne after a brief reign as Edward VIII, to marry an American divorcée, Wallis Simpson, and Albert, who then became George VI, had seen his progeny increased only by the ar-

rival, in 1930, of another daughter, Margaret Rose. By the end of 1936—the tumultuous Year of Three Kings—ten-year-old Elizabeth had to start thinking of herself as the future monarch of England. She was, fortunately, by her solid, responsible, resolute temperament, well suited for the daunting role. Winston Churchill, who met Elizabeth for the first time when she was two and a half years old, presciently told his wife, “She has an air of authority and reflectiveness astonishing in an infant.”

One of the most pleasurable sections of Sarah Bradford's “Elizabeth: A Biography of Britain's Queen” (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; \$30) consists of the early pages, where we are invited to imagine what it was like to be such a child, reared in simultaneous global fame and drastic seclusion, at a time when the monarchy, though reduced to chiefly ceremonial functions, still wore traces of prehistoric mystery and grandeur. Elizabeth was, as Bradford tells it, a dear little girl, serene and orderly and obedient. Most everybody loved her. The public, stimulated by the then hot medium of magazines (Elizabeth was on the cover of *Time* at the age of three), loved her to such an extent that her mother wrote to Queen Mary, the child's grandmother, “It almost frightens me that the people should love her so much. I suppose that it is a good thing, and I hope that she will be worthy of it, poor little darling.” When, four years after her birth, her sister appeared, Elizabeth was “maternally protective,” and she has remained so, to a sibling whose character—“extrovert, capricious, attention-seeking, imaginative and naughty”—stands in sharp contrast to her own. Their parents, who for Elizabeth's first ten years led the relatively private lives of the Duke and Duchess of York, loved the girls; Albert, a shy, academically inept stammerer, cleaved to his wife, an

aristocratic Scot of great animation and charm, and presided over a nuclear family—“us four,” in his frequent phrase—of exceptional coziness. Elizabeth later wrote, “I have nothing but wonderfully happy memories of childhood days at home, fun, kindness & a marvellous sense of security.” Even her grandfather, who had been an intimidating tyrant to his sons, loved her; he played and joked with “Lilibet” in a way that he had not with his own children, and introduced her to the world of horses, which was to be ever after her passion and retreat. Her wicked uncle David and his even wickeder wife did not, in their embittering exile, love her; they referred to her, in their private communications, as “Shirley Temple” and, into her monarchy, as “the girl.”

The girl married early and pleasingly. At the age of thirteen, she developed an adolescent crush on an eighteen-year-old cousin, Prince Philip of Greece, who was serving as a naval cadet at the time. A scion of harried, rootless nobility, virtually on his own from the age of ten, Philip was pressed forward by his family, his uncle Lord Mountbatten foremost, as a prospective consort, and the match, consummated by their marriage, in 1947, proved, according to Bradford, to be an excellent one:

The marriage was a success on every level; physically, mentally, and temperamentally the couple were compatible. Elizabeth was physically passionate and very much in love with her husband. Philip found her sexually attractive and was equally, although perhaps more coolly, in love.

This reassuring information is relayed without source attribution, but little evidence exists that contradicts it. The always fascinating, though by now scarcely earthshaking, question of Philip's infidelities is disposed of briskly, in the affirmative:

Philip has learned to carry on his flirtations and relationships in circles rich and grand enough to provide protection from the paparazzi and the tabloids. . . . The women are always younger than he, usually beautiful and highly aristocratic. They include a princess, a duchess, two or perhaps three countesses, and other titled and untitled ladies.

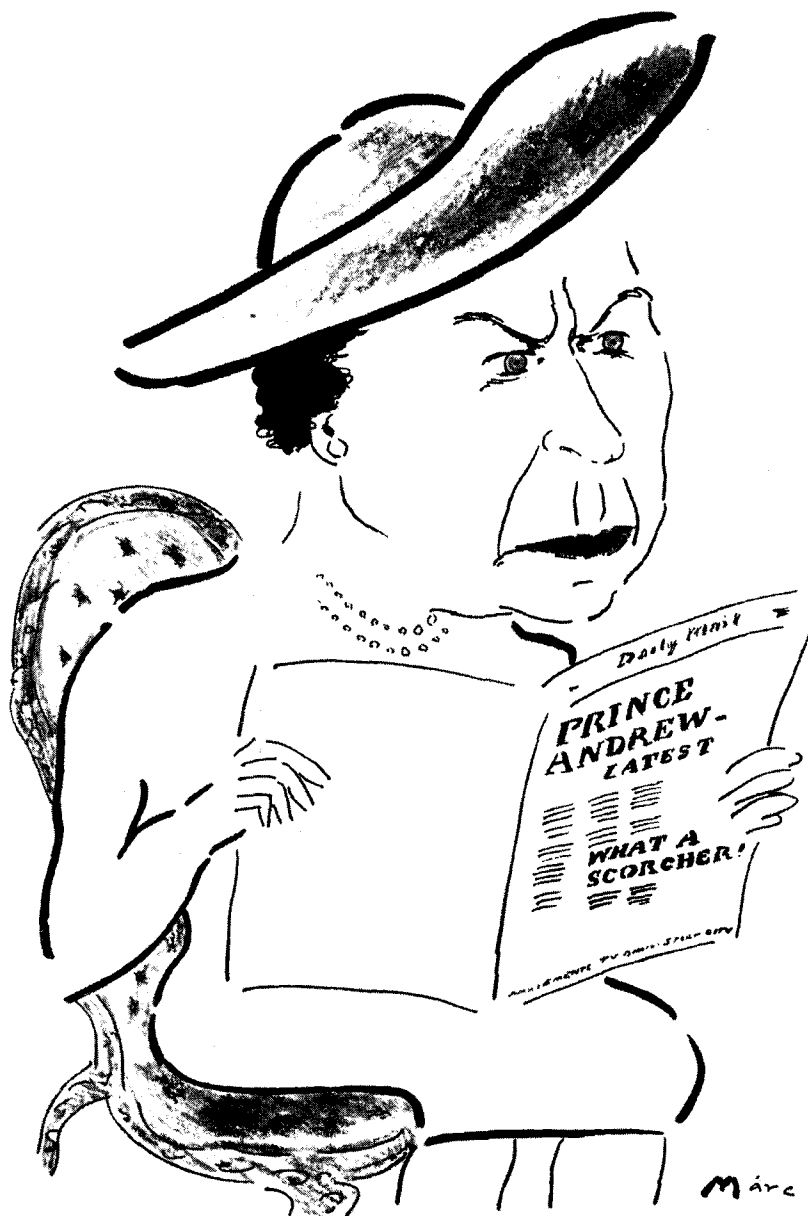
It all sounds rather abstractly posh, and one would like to know more of the lady-in-waiting who, when she attempted to enlighten Elizabeth about some affair of Philip's, got sacked for her trouble. The anecdote ends like an admonitory fairy

tales: "Appalled at her indiscretion, the lady later committed suicide."

The Duke of Edinburgh's strengths and deficiencies were summed up by an acquaintance: "He's 150 per cent male and that's his trouble really." Bradford gives the plausible impression that Philip's faults—gruffness, impatience, wanderlust—are what a woman of Elizabeth's age and class expects in a man. They still share a bed, and their recent time of family troubles has brought them closer. "I think he's been apparently absolutely wonderful to her and incredibly supportive" is one tribute given him since 1992, the catastrophic year that the Queen dubbed her *annus horribilis*. "They have come together very much lately," a courtier is quoted as saying. Sometimes restive and tactless, Philip has for nearly half a century faithfully discharged his major obligation: he has fitted himself into a narrow slot where many another male would look absurd. He does not: he sets her off in public becomingly. Unlike the Windsor spouses of the next generation, he—grandson of George I of Greece, great-grandson of Christian IX of Denmark, and great-great-grandson of Queen Victoria—understood the royal game as it is played in the twilight of titled Europe. Dignity and discretion are increasingly difficult for a public figure to maintain, yet he has honored the Queen with these virtues, and with what can only be construed, allowing for the opacity of aristocratic liaisons, as love.

ELIZABETH was a contented Navy wife, and the twenty-six-year-old mother of two, when her father died, in his mid-fifties, worn out by a heavy

nicotine habit and the cares of a kingship he had not wanted. She stepped confidently into her role and, in her royal responsibilities, has hardly put a foot wrong since. A conscientious, quick study, she always mastered the dispatch boxes of state papers that her curious position, or-



Elizabeth II turns seventy this month: God help the Queen.

namental and central, demands that she peruse, and was demurely submissive to the vast and antiquated apparatus of ceremonial royal duty. In addition, she was lovely, in just the proper reserved, unspectacular way. Margaret would have made a more striking and expressive queen, but would she have worn as well and presided as soothingly? Elizabeth's slender, calm, almost plain good looks can still be seen on English stamps, which have not aged with her. Bernard

Baruch in 1953 called her "the world's sweetheart" and listed her, with Churchill and "a glorious historical past," as one of England's three (and only three) assets. The country was then a tattered relic of its imperial self; it fell to her to embody optimism and symbolize national well-being. She took upon herself immediately the task of cementing British ties with the Commonwealth, which had replaced the vanished Empire, and committed herself to a tremendous amount of travel, which took her much away from Charles and his sister, Anne. She had also, as a young monarch, to navigate the sea change within her family—her abrupt transformation into the head of a household that contained her formidable husband (who, upon being told that his name of Mountbatten, once Battenberg, was to be supplanted by his wife's name of Windsor, exploded, "I'm nothing but a bloody amoeba!"); her still vivacious, admired mother; and her moody, erratic, rather hedonistic sister, whose quest for a mate was to prove as ill-fated as Elizabeth's was fortunate. (It speaks well for Elizabeth's warm and forbearing nature, and for the conservatism of her emotional attachments, that through many a storm she has sustained with

Margaret the affectionate and tolerant relations established in the palace nursery.)

The Queen took up her crown with an aplomb that startled those nearest her. "I no longer feel anxious or worried," she told a friend. "I don't know what it is—but I have lost all my timidity somehow becoming the Sovereign." Sarah Bradford—in private life the Viscountess Bangor—describes the sovereign duties with a detail that some American readers may feel is more than ample. We are in-



"No, it's not going to be O.K."

roduced to the intricacies of the inner circles of palace management, where upper-crust courtiers come and go, arranging official parties and the Queen's often brutal schedule. One of her Private Secretaries is quoted as saying, "She's got very good legs and she can stand for a long time. . . . The Queen is as tough as a yak." Intimates and servants sporting names like Bobbety and Porchy and Boy and Basher and Bennie and Bobo circulate through the royal life. Forty years of English history reel by, in Bradford's account, with each Prime Minister from Churchill on described in terms of his—or, in the lone case of Margaret Thatcher, her—relation with the sovereign, whom the Prime Minister is obliged to brief in weekly sessions. After Churchill, Elizabeth got along best with two leaders of the Labour Party, Harold Wilson and James Callaghan. Things were comparatively awkward with Anthony Eden, in his brief doomed tenure, and with the stiff, introverted Edward Heath; the Queen, a member of the household confided, "found Heath hard going." On the much mooted relationship

between Elizabeth and Mrs. Thatcher, Bradford is succinct: both women were "highly professional and dedicated to their jobs," but they came from different worlds, Elizabeth a rural conservative and Thatcher a suburban revolutionary, who never did figure out what shoes to take for an outdoorsy visit to Balmoral. (Whereas Denis Thatcher and the Duke of Edinburgh, with nothing much else to do, enjoyed each other's company considerably.) More regal in accent and manner than the Queen, Thatcher revered the monarchy but did not charm Elizabeth, who was once heard to ask, "Do you think Mrs. Thatcher will ever change?" Yet, Bradford says of Elizabeth, "not one leading politician who has worked with her has anything but admiration and fondness for her." Even the anti-monarchist Labourite Tony Benn allowed, "She is not very clever but is reasonably intelligent and she is experienced." From the peculiar elevation of the monarchy, we learn, class distinctions between Tory and Labour politicians disappear; according to Sir Godfrey Agnew, Clerk of the Privy Council, "They all roughly be-

long to the same social category in her view." In the periodic battles over the rising costs of the monarchy and its offshoots, the Prime Ministers have all supported the royal cause against parliamentary republicans.

As Elizabeth's four children matured and married, the British public had increasing reason to wonder what they were paying for. In the nineteen-fifties, Margaret's frustrated romance with Peter Townsend, a divorced equerry, showed the press how many newspapers any dysfunction in the Royal Family would sell. Her eventual marriage to and split with the semi-bohemian photographer Antony Armstrong-Jones; Princess Anne's divorce from her fellow show rider Mark Phillips and her marriage, in the Church of Scotland, to a less plodding horseman, Timothy Laurence; Prince Andrew's paparazzi-bedevilled breakup with the rambunctious Sarah Ferguson—all these, though meat to the tabloids, are tasty side dishes compared with the imbroglio between Prince Charles and Princess Diana, which casts a heavy shadow upon the character of the next in the royal succession and upon the welfare of his heir, thirteen-year-old Prince William. The psychodrama is ongoing; the American edition of Bradford's book manages to include such recent developments as Di's dour television interview and the Queen's directive that a divorce should take place. Elizabeth's hope, presumably, is to stanch the frightful bleeding of public grievance and self-pity, but the wound that her son has taken is already deep. The public, never totally easy with this diffident, sad-eyed mixture of playboy and Greenpeace, now confronts a confessed adulterer as the prospective head of the established Church and a future king who must either remain queenless or try to brazen through a Queen Camilla where a Queen Wallis had been unthinkable.

Bradford makes a sympathetic case for Charles, along the lines of his own possibly overabundant testimony: a sensitive child abused by a bullying father and a distant, preoccupied mother was further hampered in his development by the isolating singularity of his position. Once out of the Navy, where he did not experience the fulfillment his father and George V did, he resisted official efforts to find him a job; Ambassador to France

was one of the suggestions that went nowhere. "He wanted to be a dabbler" was one government minister's verdict. As Charles wistfully searched for himself in Oriental mysticism, anthropology, and amateur cultural criticism, his relations with his parents chilled. His romantic life went adrift. His great-uncle Lord Mountbatten had become his surrogate father, and gave him some advice that eventually backfired: "A man should sow his wild oats before settling down. But for a wife he should choose a suitable and sweet-charactered girl before she meets anyone else she might fall for." That is, marry a virgin—a barbaric requirement in this day and age, bound to block Charles from his natural mates. In the long bachelor stretch between his letting Camilla Shand slip away, in 1973 (he failed to propose before he went off on a Navy tour of duty, and in any case she may have been already enamored of her soon-to-be husband, Andrew Parker Bowles), and his marrying Lady Diana Spencer, in 1981, there was "a string of beautiful upper-class and not so upper-class girls," at least one of whom declined to become his wife. Not every eligible woman—not even Mountbatten's candidate, his granddaughter Amanda Knatchbull—wanted to enter the gilded royal cage, or fishbowl. One who did was the younger sister of Lady Sarah Spencer, herself a former girlfriend.

Diana gets a very tough report in Bradford's gleanings. She is said to resemble, "in looks and character," her mother, the former Frances Roche, who seduced her father, John Althorp, away from his fiancée and then "bolted," in English parlance, into the arms of a married man, Peter Shand Kydd. The Spencers were "difficult," a relative stated. "As a family, they like to live among dramas. . . . They're not straightforward." Diana was six at the time of the divorce, and her brother Charles told her biographer, "I don't know whether a psychologist would say it was the trauma of the divorce but she had real difficulty telling the truth purely because she liked to embellish things." A school report claimed, "Diana Spencer is the most scheming little girl I have ever met." She had high hopes for herself; her family nickname was Duch, for "Duchess." Bradford asserts, "From the age of fifteen she wanted the Prince of Wales." When she succeeded in landing him, however, qualms

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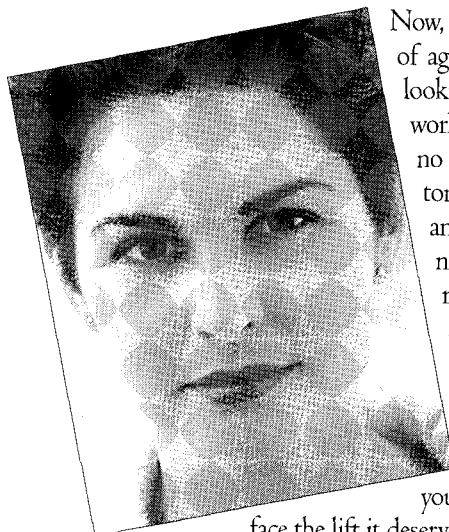
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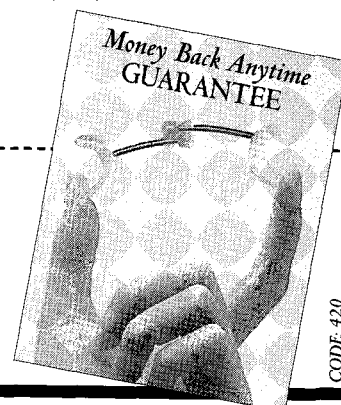
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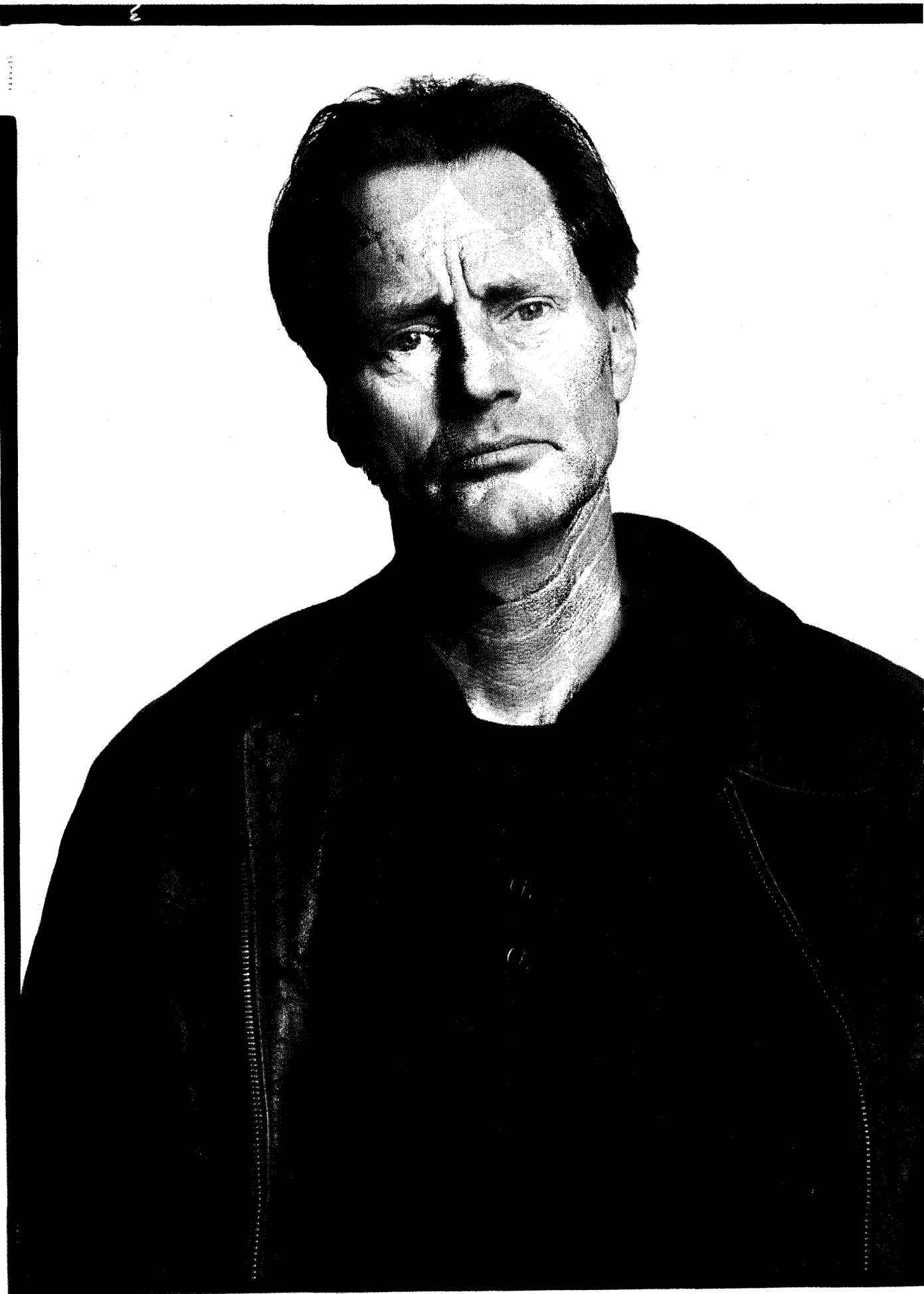
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AT fifty-two, Sam Shepard has come to look like one of his own solitary characters, reëmerging after long exile from some blasted American Nowhere—the desert, the badlands, the bewildering plains. And, indeed, Shepard seems to have been away for a while. During the last dozen years, he has produced only three plays, and his fluky career as a movie actor has become increasingly offbeat and desultory. Yet he hasn't been idle. He now lives outside Minneapolis with his companion, Jessica Lange, and their children; he is raising some fifty head of cattle there, and he has been writing at a furious pace, in preparation for what is beginning to look like a Shepard jubilee year.

The latest Shepard surge actually began last fall, when he and the actor-director Gary Sinise staged an extensively revised version of Shepard's best play, "Buried Child" (which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1979), at Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre Company. On April 30th, that production, with further revisions, will open in New York at the Brooks Atkinson; it will be Shepard's Broadway debut. Then, in the fall, New York's Signature Theatre Company will devote its entire season to Shepard: he plans to provide a new play as well as an "overhauled" version of his 1972 drama "The Tooth of Crime" and a new collaboration with his mentor, the actor-director Joseph Chaikin.

It was Chaikin who, in the mid-sixties, inspired Shepard's theatrical insurrection. Spurred by the "transformation" exercises that Chaikin devised for actors, Shepard felt free to let his characters mutate suddenly in mid-scene. Within a few sentences, they might speak in Southern voices, Western voices, the voices of hit men and tough guys. Perhaps what interested Shepard most was the difference between the voices people converse with and the voices they think with—the internal, commenting babble that accompanies us even in repose. "In the conventional play, the soliloquies always seemed to have this

responsibility to realism or naturalism," he says. "But why? Why couldn't a character carry on an external monologue that was in fact an internal monologue just coming out? And why couldn't it be off the wall or exploratory, the way the inner monologue really is?" Shepard's plays explored what he came to view as a psychological truth—that each of us contains multitudes, that identity is forever shifting. The narrative convention that called for consistent, motivated characters to move along an "arc" dictated by a Dark Secret or a Tragic Flaw was, to Shepard, at odds with the human condition. He had no interest in stage "realism"; instead, he created a theatre that pulled the audience into the reality of the moment. "We're never in the present," he says. "And theatre is the ideal arena for talking about the present, because it is about this actual confrontation between the actor and the audience. It's happening. It calls us to being there."

Undeniably, he has slowed down. "Seems like playwrights hit a certain place where they're either repeating past work or trying to invent new stuff that has nowhere near the impact of the earlier work," he says. But much of his finest recent writing hasn't been for the stage at all. For the past six years, Shepard has been laboring on a book of short "tales" (three of which appeared in this magazine last month); it is called "Cruising Paradise" and will be published by Knopf in May. Shepard has brought out volumes of prose and verse before, but they often sounded like so much cowboy talk straining for faux-naïf poetry. In "Cruising Paradise," there's no strain at all: the cowboy talk has real muscle, and the pain and vulnerability in some of the pieces are startling. "I don't believe in writing as a catharsis," Shepard says. "It's not purging or getting rid of something; it's taking it into a different form, rather than destroying the room you're in. I've trashed many a motel room, and it doesn't work. You just have a big bill at the end. I think I've progressed since then." —STEPHEN SCHIFF

set in; she knew about Charles's stubbornly lingering attachment to Mrs. Parker Bowles. When, within a week of the wedding, she confided to her sisters, Sarah and Jane, her suspicion that Charles loved not her but Camilla, she was cheerily told, "Bad luck, Duch—your face is on the tea towels so it's too late for you to chicken out." Indeed, the wedding seems to have gone forward from the sheer momentum of the hoopla. At the pre-wedding ball in Buckingham Palace, Charles danced once with Diana and often with Camilla, and disappeared with her after Diana retired. Among the many inauspicious signs was the Queen's failure to warm to the bride: "Diana, she quickly realised, was not her type of girl. . . . She was interested in clothes, pop music, dancing and shopping while horses and dogs, hunting, shooting and fishing, the royal pastimes, bored her."

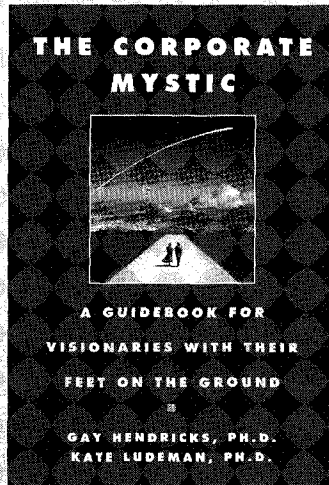
Still, however many shortcomings, hereditary and acquired, the tall virgin brought to the marriage, the onus of its failure cannot be shifted from Charles. He was a thirty-two-year-old man of the world who had made his choice; Diana was an ill-educated innocent who kept her part of the bargain by enchanting the public and quickly bearing one male heir and then another, for good measure. Yet by the time of Prince Henry's birth, in September of 1984, the couple were poisonously estranged and Charles was back in the arms of the compliant Camilla. Who can be blamed but he? "She worshipped him with a calf-like adoration," said one palace aide, "and he kicked her in the gutter." Our impression, after reading Bradford's evenhanded account, remains that Charles, compounding obtuseness and entitled arrogance, in little more than three years turned a fairy-tale wedding into an unconcealable botch. His blundering has not been mitigated by some cunning public pleading, which has hurt others. His self-serving confession of adultery, on television in June of 1994, made it impossible for the Parker Bowleses to continue with their close-mouthed open marriage. His coöperation with his authorized biographer, Jonathan Dimbleby, extended to giving access to such a wealth of state papers and official material that Elizabeth had to demand some back. The portrait of his parents in that book has, Bradford says, outraged his three siblings. He has emerged as a

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD AVEDON

Sam Shepard, New York City, March 27, 1996.

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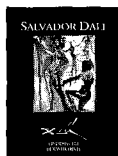


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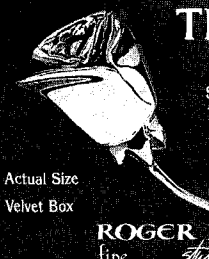
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ringmaster in a circus of exposure and media manipulation—a circus wherein Diana's former lover, James Hewitt, has climbed to dizzying heights of coddishness by baring their affair in print and now peddling the story to television for millions of pounds.

I CAN'T understand my children," Elizabeth is reported to have told a friend. She and Philip, it may be, did not create a household as warm as the one headed by her father and mother, who would join their daughters in pillow fights; then (according to Marion Crawford's early palace-tattle book "The Little Princesses") "arm in arm, the young parents would go downstairs, heated and dishevelled and frequently rather damp." But a dry independence and self-reliance are traditional Anglo-Saxon virtues, inculcated with especial rigor in the British upper classes. Was not Elizabeth, too, reared in large part by nurses, nannies, governesses, grooms, and other servants? Further, nurture can only do so much with nature. A hereditary monarchy depends upon belief in royal blood, in a right stuff that is passed on at birth. It must surprise her that the ideals of duty, self-restraint, and stoic endurance were not passed on with her genes. Her natural endowment was superb for the straitened role she had to play. Her French tutor, Antoinette de Bellaigue, said of her, "She had an instinct for the right thing. She was her simple self, *très naturelle*. And there was always a strong sense of duty mixed with *joie de vivre* in her character." Anne seems to have inherited the sense of duty and Andrew the *joie de vivre* but Charles a satisfactory portion of neither.

And yet Elizabeth is shy and, in public, stiff. She is no more of a glad-hander than her father was. The moments in her life when she mingled with a cross-section of her future subjects on something like their terms are touchingly few. A heavily hedged hitch in the Auxiliary Territorial Service toward the end of the Second World War left her with an automotive expertise of which she is proud, and, before the birth of Princess Anne, she enjoyed a few months as a Navy wife on Malta: "There was swimming, dancing, picnics, expeditions by boat to the beaches and coves round the island and to Gozo. She could even go shopping and out to the hairdresser and enjoy in-

jokes with the other naval wives. She was happy and pregnant." She is still so innocently curious about ordinary life that she sometimes quizzes the Scottish soldiers on protection duty at a Balmoral shoot about their personal lives. Watching the two-hour television show "Elizabeth R," made by the BBC, one somewhat pities her, condemned to deal daily with so many strangers and dignitaries performing prescribed courtesies. She offers, as Prime Minister Callaghan found in their audiences, "friendliness but not friendship." Diana, still on view in this royally sanctioned film, has a relative ease in brief encounters, a quickness in making contact that is perhaps as much a generational as a personal trait. Yet in her recent pronouncements the Princess seems to overestimate her official viability once she is no longer the daughter-in-law of, as Edmund Spenser wrote of Elizabeth I, the "souveraine Lady Queene, / In whose pure minde, as in a mirrour sheene, / [Praise] shewes, and with her brightnesse doth inflame / The eyes of all, which thereon fixed beene."

Sarah Bradford's biography of this exalted being is well researched, if hurriedly written. Commas are dropped, phrases dangle, she says "inferred" when she means "implied," and the same quotations sometimes cycle around again. The maze of names and connections more than once leads her into run-on sentences:

Sarah [York], who had ignored the scolding of her cousin, Robert Fellowes, whom she contemptuously referred to as "Bellows," and the warnings about Wyatt from her father (who at one point was sharing his mistress, Lesley Player, with Wyatt), was apparently now gently told off by her mother-in-law and ordered to "Chill him" by her mother, Susan Barrantes.

Like such phrases as "stump up" (for "cough up") and "tore a strip off" (for "berate"), the abundant detail about the qualifications and antecedents of minor courtiers adds to the book's uniquely British piquancy. Without their crowns and coronets, how could the English be distinguished from the Icelanders? Bradford likes Elizabeth, and we get to share her liking, along with a sneaking fondness for all the Windsors. Neither flashy nor clever, they have tended to rise to what the occasion demanded (George VI weathering the Blitz in London, for instance), and in their earthbound stodginess have kept a connection with the British masses. George V, bewildered by the warmth of his reception in the East

End during his Silver Jubilee year, said to the Archbishop of Canterbury, "But I cannot understand. I am quite an ordinary sort of fellow." The Archbishop replied, "Yes, Sir, that is just it." Lloyd George said of the King, "Thank God there's not much in his head. They're simply, very very ordinary people, and perhaps on the whole that's how it should be." Chesterton somewhere wrote that a democracy and a monarchy are alike in proposing that any man is fit to rule.

Elizabeth will never abdicate, Bradford states flatly. On the future of the monarchy in general she left this reader with a two-edged impression: England could dispense with a monarch but probably won't. For all Elizabeth's patient mastery of the state papers and her knowledgeable consultations with her Prime Ministers, the book cites no instance where her advice has influenced national events. Even her usefulness as a rallying point for the Commonwealth has diminished to the vanishing point as England has cast in its economic lot with the Euro-

pean Union. On the other hand, replacing the monarchy—which at present costs the British public an estimated eighty million pounds a year—with a European-style President "would not necessarily save a great deal." Presidential elections cost a pretty penny, and a "constitutional monarch is apolitical in a way which no president can be." If Elizabeth survives to anything like the age of her mother, who is ninety-five and smiling, Charles will have many years in which to live down his present embarrassments. His great-great-grandfather Edward VII was a disreputable Prince of Wales but a popular King. The same kind fate that plucked Victoria from the snarl of wicked uncles who had made the monarchy a distasteful joke, and that saw to the death of the unsuitable Duke of Clarence, George V's older brother, before he could ascend to the throne, may continue to preside over Elizabeth's heirs. For her children to completely squander the treasure of good will that her long and dutiful reign has accumulated, they would have to work overtime. ♦

TROUBLED CHILDREN

They're not who you think they are.

BY SARA MOSLE

A FEW years ago, when I was an elementary-school teacher in New York, I happened to attend a dinner party where I was seated across from former Mayor Ed Koch, and conversation naturally turned to what was at the time a raging debate over plans to distribute condoms to the city's high-school students. The controversy had consumed almost all the energy of the Board of Education for months, had prompted many Op-Ed articles, and would eventually help lead to the ouster of the schools chancellor, Joseph A. Fernandez, who supported the measure. I



Richard Weissbourd

found the issue to be largely irrelevant to the problems facing most teachers in their classrooms, but during dinner Koch worked out a fine, hairsplitting position on the matter: he wasn't against the distribution of condoms per se; he was just against *teachers'* handing them out. "It should be left to the school nurses," he said.

"What school nurses?"

I asked, wearily. There were then and still are only a few hundred school nurses, to serve more than a million students in the New York City school system. (How could he not know this?) I often had to minister to my students' cuts and bruises, sore

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throats, upset stomachs, eye problems, and asthma attacks. I fear that I made misdiagnoses and may have occasionally overlooked manifestations of other kinds of serious distress like depression or malnutrition. One often hears the phrase "children in crisis," but it raises this question: Why must kids be "in crisis" before they merit our attention?

In "The Vulnerable Child" (Addison-Wesley; \$22), Richard Weissbourd criticizes the country's "E.R." approach to children in need: expensive, last-minute interventions, offered only when a child is in critical condition and hope of a full recovery is remote. Weissbourd, who teaches at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and Graduate School of Education, calls for more preventive medicine. He begins by stating the stereotypes: "Disadvantaged children, conventional wisdom has it, come from poor and broken homes. They are commonly neglected or abused, and they—or their parents—often abuse drugs. Most are African-American and live in ghetto neighborhoods. The future for these children is dark and virtually sealed. . . . Most disadvantaged children are destined to fail in school, become parents too early," and "drift in and out of employment." With an onslaught of facts and statistics, Weissbourd then undercuts these assumptions: the facts are that blacks represent only a third of all children in poverty; most poor children are poor only temporarily; most do not live in ghettos; the majority do not use drugs; most do not commit crimes; and most do not report significant learning delays or emotional difficulties in grade school; about half live with a parent who works. There are many factors, such as a depressed parent or constant mobility, that can imperil children as much as poverty alone does. The chance that a kid will drop out of high school, for instance, increases each time his or her family relocates, regardless of the family income; in fact, most high-school dropouts are white, and the majority have *never* been poor.

Weissbourd argues that many seemingly intractable social problems, such as juvenile delinquency and illiteracy, begin simply, with treatable causes—among them inadequate reading glasses, undiagnosed hearing problems, and

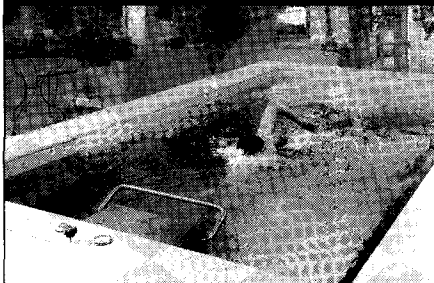
even obesity in grade school. He cites the case of a bright young boy in a working-class town in Massachusetts, whom he calls Michael Moran, who experiences academic and social difficulties after his parents' divorce. His father drops out of the picture and fails to provide child support, so Michael's mother lands on the dole. They move, and he has a hard time making new friends: his fellow-students are better off and viciously tease Michael for being a "welly" (on welfare); teachers do not recognize his learning disabilities, which are exacerbated by further teasing. Michael's mother tries to address his needs by looking to the school for guidance and help, but not until Michael's problems have escalated to the point where he crawls under his classroom desk and wails for help do teachers and social workers finally descend to resuscitate him by sending him to a special school for academically troubled teens; this works, but, coming along so late, it's a costly solution. A little counselling earlier, or perhaps day care so that his mother could find a better job, or an after-school program, might have spared Michael much suffering.

Weissbourd's prescriptions are all sensible, even if we've heard them before: insuring that mothers get prenatal care, for instance, and arranging to have disadvantaged children attend pre-kindergarten classes to prepare them for school. His flashiest idea is to set up one-stop community centers—ideally, in local schools—where teachers, nurses, social workers, and police can work together to assist families before they are "in crisis," though this idea, too, is familiar. His recommendations, like those of so many education reformers, are bedevilled by his having to state the obvious—a problem he never quite acknowledges. We know that such programs can work, but money and interest tend to flock to the kinds of topics—like condom distribution—that make for better dinner conversation. ♦

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BRIEFLY NOTED

EMERSON AMONG THE ECCENTRICS: A GROUP PORTRAIT, by Carlos Baker (Viking; \$34.95). Any group in which Henry David Thoreau emerges as a pillar of levelheadedness is aptly dubbed eccentric, but Baker resists treating Emerson's friends as foils, in spite of their occasional lapses into egotism or insanity. This generosity of spirit is consistent with that of Emerson himself: he stands revealed as a perceptive and sympathetic friend whose optimism remained intact through countless disappointments and not a few tragedies. Baker had nearly completed this manuscript at his death, in 1987, and, except for minor revisions, this book is as he left it.

AT HOME IN FRANCE, by Ann Barry (Ballantine; \$20). The author of this intelligent memoir is like a happily married woman with a long-established lover. The marriage, in this case, is to her co-op in Brooklyn with its two cats; the paramour is a stone farmhouse in the southwest of France, where she can only spend four weeks a year. We learn not only the difficulties and pleasures of such far-flung attachments, but why the author chooses solitude, and how she tracked down the best bread in the province.

PLAYING OFF THE RAIL, by David McCumber (Random House; \$25). A streetwise, pleasantly evil look at the game of pool, which is a gambling sport not yet sanitized by what McCumber calls the "Fellowship of Christian Athletes types." He plays financial backer to a sharp-tongued player named Tony Annigoni, and takes him on the road across North America in search of high-stakes games. The world they find is the one that "shows its ass to the railroad tracks," but it's also a world where pool is played with "the transcendent power of a Handel chorus." Handel aside, this is a terrific book, meant to be read with a flat beer and a stale cigar.

DOUBLES, by Robert Polito (Chicago; \$8.95). The poems in this collection are as striking for their language, which reveals a subtle rhetorical intelligence, as for their dramas, which exist in an atmosphere charged with violence. Polito handles his volatile material with an almost ritual caution: an instinct for structure and symmetry guides his descent into the underworld of adulterous betrayal and psychic exposure. But it is this very circumspection that draws us in and makes us feel that "to move here would mean pushing against a force/Palpable, and strong."

THE MASTER LETTERS, by Lucie Brock-Broido (Knopf; \$20). Fifty-two poems exploring power and powerlessness, consciousness and self-consciousness—the whole phrased as an homage to Emily Dickinson. Dickinson's nineteenth-century devices serve Brock-Broido as camouflage for the post-Holocaust belief that in a time of total war—social, racial, psychosexual, spiritual—coherence is either dishonest or impossible. In a weird reversal of poetic power, the author risks gibberish—even courts it—and sometimes makes her case. Images from taxidermy, Pompeii, an execution lead her to tour-de-force fusions of derangement and sense.

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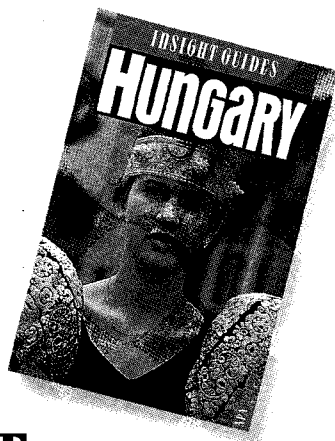
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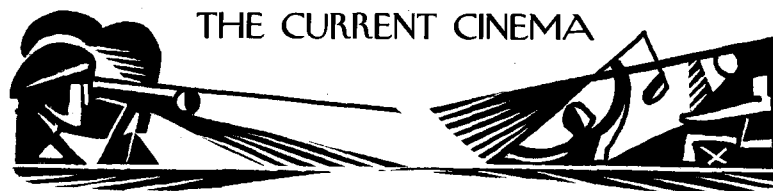
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THE CURRENT CINEMA

ON THE PEACH

A Roald Dahl classic comes to life, and "Nelly and Monsieur Arnaud."

BY ANTHONY LANE

MOVIE directors should be falling over themselves, grazing their knees and elbows, to film the books that Roald Dahl wrote for children. Not that children would be the sole, or even the ideal, audience; indeed, Henry Selick's brave new adaptation of "James and the Giant Peach," like Nicolas Roeg's cackling 1990 version of "The Witches," is best viewed by an adult in the company of a child. Who should buy the tickets is a matter of some nicety; I tend to think that the kid should shell out. Dahl's greatest talent, after all, was that he brokered a tacit (and temporary) truce in the war between the generations: his youthful heroes assert a level of control that seems dangerously mature, while grown-up readers are reminded, with a firm smack on the brain, of the messy pleasures that they once abandoned in the interests of an average life.

For the sake of those unfortunates who have never encountered the original story, the hard facts of "James and the Giant Peach" are as follows. James is a small English boy who, having lost his parents in a regrettable rhino incident, is farmed out to a pair of noxious aunts named Spiker and Sponge, who live in a decrepit house in the country. One day, he meets an old man who offers him a bag of bright-green wormlets; these, the man explains, have magical powers, but why he fails to follow up with an invitation to the next Woodstock festival I have never quite grasped. Cautioned to take care, James immediately trips and spills the squirmers in the garden, where they have an effect more potent than that of any known compost. A rudely swelling peach grows, comes loose, flattens the aunts, then rolls down the hill and into the sea. Hitching a ride inside the peach are James and a select company of talking bugs. By a combina-

tion of floating along in the water and seagull-powered air travel, they finally arrive in New York. All in all, your basic dirty realism.

Selick's movie treats Dahl's book with fidelity rather than with awe. It has a terrible Randy Newman song about love and families but also a wonderful Randy Newman song about food, based on Dahl's own lyrics ("And a rather smelly jelly / Made of armadillo's toes"). Selick tacks on a variety of twists: I loved the idea that the aunts do not die beneath the tumbling peach but reappear at the end, dripping with seaweed and staggering away from a crushed car on the streets of New York. The casual implication that in slavering pursuit of their fruit they have just driven across the ocean floor is at once a good joke and a fearful admission that wickedness is hard to stop—that it will always tick back into your life like the hand of a clock. Sponge and Spiker are played by Miriam Margolyes and Joanna Lumley, and it's cheering to get one last sight of these twin horrors. Lumley, in particular, sinks her teeth into the role as if she had forgotten the taste of fresh movies (how many beautiful actresses would be prepared to trash their looks so gamely?), and bites her lines off with snap and spit. "Shut up, you little grub," Spiker says to James, as if consigning him ahead of time to life among the invertebrates.

The other important fact about Aunt Spiker is that she qualifies, in a pinch, as a human being—a species in short supply as far as this film is concerned. "James and the Giant Peach" is an exercise in mixed media. It begins and ends in stylized live action: sugar-soft scenes on a beach, the crooked gray monstrosity of the aunts' dwelling, the nineteen-thirties neon of New York. James himself is played by the nine-year-old Paul Terry; once James enters

the peach, however, he is transformed into an animated model, and the remainder of the voyage—the filling in the movie's sandwich, as it were—unfolds in stop-motion animation. The bugs are three-dimensional cartoons, designed by the children's-book illustrator Lane Smith and embellished with voice-overs: the moaning refrains of the Earthworm, for example, are uttered by David Thewlis; other honors go to Richard Dreyfuss (the Centipede), Jane Leeves (the Ladybug), Simon Callow (the Grasshopper), and, best of all, Susan Sarandon, who delivers a Spider of quite terrifying sexiness. She alone, I think, manages to suggest a character, as opposed to a type; the Centipede is dressed as a Brooklyn tough guy, and the Grasshopper as an English toff, but you wouldn't want either of them climbing up your pant leg to say hello, whereas the Spider, with her low beret and guttural Dietrich tones, could loop her silk just about anywhere she liked.

Ever since the first "King Kong," stop-motion animation, with its strangely sprung energy and its ominous depth of field, has provided cinema with some of its most shuddering dreams. Henry Selick, whose previous film was "The Nightmare Before Christmas," is one of the most nimble champions of the technique; it's worth pointing out, though, that certain images in "James and the Giant Peach"—notably an iron shark that fires harpoons—were created not with models but with computer animation. Selick, in other words, is covering his bets, and no wonder. The troubling news for "James and the Giant Peach" is that the public to whom it is addressed is not the same public that existed six months ago—let alone three years ago, when Selick embarked on his project. The trouble, to be precise, is "Toy Story," which has changed the rules of animation forever. John Lasseter's movie is witty and compact, far smoother than Selick's; but there is

something antiseptic about it—no roughness to the scenes of disorder, no fear in the shadows—and I have an awful feeling that, once computer-generated movies start to cruise, poor old stop-motion will be left behind in the distance, like a horse-drawn cart. Even now, the middle section of “James and the Giant Peach”—the sequences inside and on top of the peach—will leave some audiences feeling musty and shortchanged: Why fiddle

heads that stare up from James's dinner plate, and the hilariously moist tunnel of rosy flesh through which he crawls to the stone of the peach. By this time, any Freudian psychologists in the audience will be asking why on earth they had to buy a ticket, since they should obviously be charging the movie by the hour. Roald Dahl fans, meanwhile, will be sniggering with happy recognition. He never bothered to untangle the gentle

from the disgusting; he knew, as a child knows, that nastiness is evenly sprinkled over every surface, like pepper, and all you have to do is sniff. "James and the Giant Peach" is uneven, but it's never cute, and it leaves a funny taste in your mouth, as if you had swallowed a green wormlet. What could be nicer?

"NELLY AND MONSIEUR ARNAUD" is a careful, probing, and civilized piece of work from the French director Claude Sautet. Like his previous film, *"Un Cœur en Hiver,"* it is peopled by the sort of Parisians who think that taking a second glass of Sauternes at dinner is as revolutionary as blowing up the Louvre. The title

may sound simple, but it pretty well encompasses the movie. The life of the quiet young Nelly (Emmanuelle Béart) is defined by superior word-processing skills, a chronically bored husband, and not enough cash. She meets a gentleman of means named Arnaud (Michel Serrault), who casually pays off her debts and offers her a job. He is composing his memoirs, and Nelly's function is to take dictation, to type, and to not have an affair with him. This sense of a failure to cut loose is intellectually alluring, and fairly close to the way that most of us dawdle through our days, but it ain't much fun to look at. Arnaud tells his employee to go out and "enjoy the day," and she duly leaves, but we never catch a whisper of her enjoyment—if, indeed, she finds any. Frankly, after an hour of this rip-roaring stuff, I could have used



Grow a peach, see the world: Lane Smith (left), who designed the characters, and Tim Burton, with the Ladybug, James, the Grasshopper, and the Spider.

around with a ladybug when you can design a whole world with a mouse?

If "James and the Giant Peach" does prove to be the end of the crop, it's a juicy way to go. And it was produced by Tim Burton and Denise Di Novi, who are more at home with prospects of unexplained rhinos and submarine aunts than most filmmakers are. (As a rule of thumb, always check out Di Novi's pictures: her credits include "Heathers," "Edward Scissorhands," "Little Women," and "Ed Wood." Can any other Hollywood producer claim such a splendidly weird range?) There are dabs of silly, startling beauty in "James and the Giant Peach" that you won't find anywhere else. The Grasshopper, for instance, not only plays the violin but uses his multiple limbs to perform a duet all by himself. Then, there are the rank red fish

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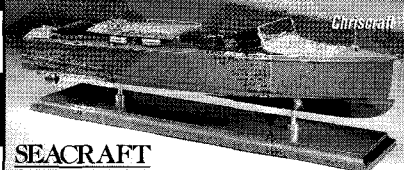
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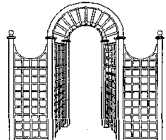
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a cameo appearance by Aunt Sponge.

There are brief bursts of emotion in "Nelly and Monsieur Arnaud," but they scarcely raise a ripple. When the heroine has a fling with Vincent (Jean-Hugues Anglade), the publisher who plans to issue Arnaud's book, we move from a dimly lit kiss to a demure morning shot of Nelly zipping up her dress and arranging her hair in front of the mirror. Given the option, I would be more than happy to watch Emmanuelle Béart pin and unpin her hair for several hours without a break, yet I can't help feeling that the cumulative effect of Sautet's essay in restraint, of his determination to dignify the conduct of his characters, is not so much to enrich their existence as to bleed them of all energy. The listlessness is not merely sexual: I watched in horror as Arnaud and Nelly went out to a flashy dinner and didn't touch their food. One expects this sort of nonsense in sensitive best-selling novels but not in the midst of a respectable movie.

Yet what is it, precisely, that we respect about "Nelly and Monsieur Arnaud"? Well, for one thing, there is Béart strolling along in cashmere sweaters and long skirts. There is also the infuriating fact that the plainest images of Paris—the opening shot of Michel Serrault sitting with his back to the mirrored wall of a restaurant while he finishes his coffee and relishes a cigarette—make you want to creep up the aisle, find a phone, and book a trip to France the following morning. Sautet disdains all extravagance, but whether this frees his movie of contrivance is another matter. When Arnaud asks Nelly, "Could your puritanical rigor in fact border on intolerance?" I didn't feel the roughness of real speech; I felt stuck inside a polished literary conceit. It is more than possible to get high on the finesse of "Nelly and Monsieur Arnaud" while not actually believing a moment of the damn thing.

What makes the picture fascinating is the sight of fine actors struggling to find their pitch inside characters who don't ring true. Arnaud is a close relative of other lonely souls in modern French cinema—François Truffaut in "The Green Room," say, or the great Philippe Noiret in "Life and Nothing But." Sautet, however, tries slightly too hard to make his hero mysterious. Arnaud was first a colonial judge, then a successful businessman; he is a *littérateur* who sells

off his books; though separated from his wife for twenty years, he suddenly decides to take off around the world with her. Serrault spies the cracks in the role, I think, and takes appropriate action: he gets funnier and more sarcastic as the film proceeds—watch his lip curl as he pronounces the word "Microsoft"—and he shows you how the solemnity of the setup could have been minutely readjusted for light comedy. "Nelly and Monsieur Arnaud" is undoubtedly refined, but I wonder about its insistence that refinement is no laughing matter. "Un Cœur en Hiver" was a far more satisfying venture, because it earned its frosty mood—the dissatisfactions that wound through the plot pulled it close to despair—whereas Arnaud's most profound problem is, I think, that he needs a better editor. Only once does the pressure rise: Arnaud offers Nelly a bed for the night, then slips into her room in the small hours and gazes at her naked back, like Ingres on the brink of a charcoal sketch. The camera, ever courteous, moves toward her with heart-stopping slowness. Needless to say, the old man doesn't get into bed with the young nude: he holds her hand for a while, then goes away and has another cup of coffee. ♦

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BY PAUL GRIFFITHS

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Maddalena, the servant-turned-politician Gérard, the sansculotte Mathieu, and the nameless spy rendered in the cast list as the "Incredible" as they are the Tenor, the Soprano, the Baritone, the Bass-Baritone the Character Tenor. The plot is a way to provide, twice over, the most



André Chénier (1762-94): rococo poet, lover, and loser in the game of Revolution—and, through Pavarotti's voice, a star.

Giordano and his librettist, Luigi Illica, as they were from the poet André Chénier and his silent adversary, Maximilien Robespierre. On the evidence of the opera, such a distance in time could be worrying. However, James Levine and his team at the Met deal a lot more faithfully with their sources than did Giordano and Illica, and the result is a sweet success, which is as much as could be hoped for from an opera where, for all the Revolutionary happenings in the background, what matters is rather little. The Phrygian caps, rosettes, and tricolors of the chorus come and go; the essence is the lyric moment of solo or duet.

Giordano's music does not create characters but instead fills out, very expertly, the necessary conditions for an operatic evening. The principals we meet are not so much Chénier, his beloved

basic formula of opera: the Soprano sings; the Tenor sings; they sing together. Any attempt in the production to draw meaning out of the French Revolution story would be disastrous, and happily none is here made. Nicolas Joël's staging and Hubert Monloup's designs simply provide an elegant décor within which people can stand and sing. And there are the right people to do just that.

In the title role, Luciano Pavarotti is in lustrous voice. The sound is as generous as ever and is unforced, except right at the end of the first-act aria, "Un di all'azzurro spazio," where force is written in. Phrases are long and levelly uttered, with apparently no effort needed to shape them, and the quick ornamentation in "Come un bel di di maggio," in the last act, is accommodated without the hint of a slip: Mr. Pavarotti's voice just moves

HANK BLAUSTEIN

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that way, nimbly, gracefully, and freshly. The fact that he always sounds the same is not a criticism, given the kind of work he does: sameness is one of his strengths, in that it means he is always himself, and always recognizable. As I've suggested, his role in "Chénier" is not that of a rococo poet, lover, and loser in the game of Revolution but that of the Tenor: a voice and a star. Recognizability, therefore, is a requirement. So the things that are always the same in Mr. Pavarotti's performances—the clear, bright tone, the textured consonants that are as tuneful as the vowels, the easy delivery, the singing that comes from singing's favorite place, where rapture is edged with regret—are the things that make him an excellent Chénier.

It's a bonus that stardom should in his case be expressed with a touching vulnerability. The character he presents onstage is still a child and still, close on thirty years after his Met début, unspoiled. Partly, that's because he never looks quite at ease. As himself, in monster concerts, he radiates confidence and fills whatever space he's in; this is the persona we know from his interviews and from some of the reported excesses of his offstage behavior, and "vulnerable" is probably not the first word that springs to mind to describe it. But onstage, in almost any role, he becomes again a little boy, with his arms drooping awkwardly at his sides and his gaze reluctant to leave the ground. Of course, it's his voice that chiefly gives the impression of tenderness. Because his delivery is so free, his singing seems to be that of the natural being, and to come without the modification or control of the will; the candor is that of someone in a confessional—but this confessional has four thousand listeners. We might be embarrassed were we not so convinced by Mr. Pavarotti's purity. And his purity—conveyed by his immediacy and by his high timbre, which is itself a childlike feature—is ungainsayable.

The Soprano is Aprile Mollo, a less characterful singer but a highly accomplished one. She is polished and precise, absolutely steady in pitch, and able to project a line that's tense and golden. She doesn't have Mr. Pavarotti's naturalness, but she does have her own nobility, which is enough. The contrast in their vocal manners helps inject interest in the final duet, which can be a

bloodless conclusion. The opera, having gradually weeded out its cast list (not by attrition but almost as if by carelessness), is left with just its leading couple, and does not know what to do with them. Ms. Millo and Mr. Pavarotti at least force it to think.

Juan Pons, as Gérard, or the Baritone, is a different kind of singer again. His tone is loud, bald, and challenging. His presence in the first act is a standing rebuke to the minuetting and dishonest delicacy of the aristocrats he supposedly serves, and he appears to want to pull the opera into a different dimension of dramatic reality, one that would develop the conflict of bluntness with pretense. But when we return after the first intermission we've lost the gilt and the guilt of the Château de Coigny, and Mr. Pons's Gérard has to comport himself like one whose enemies have all packed up and gone away without telling him. All he can do is maintain his vigor and smile on his changed circumstances; the vigor becomes detached from motivation, an expression only of musical health and strength, but is none the less admirable for that.

The Bass-Baritone is John Del Carlo, and he is also impressively strong, with the demeanor—which is in keeping with his singing—of an amiable bear. It's thanks to him that the third act, longer and more complex than any of the others, is firmly launched—or, rather, it's thanks to him and to Mr. Levine's orchestra, for his solo here is a powerful interplay, in which he reaches bare hands, as it were, into the pit in order to stretch out a sequence of chords and make room across them for his singing.

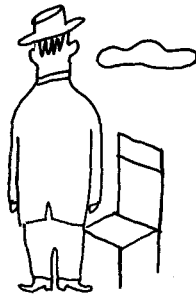
There's also fine work from Michel Sénéchal as the Incredible. He looks the part of the fop, in his striped stockings and mountainous hat, and his singing is high with insinuation. Rosalind Elias, the rich-voiced Countess de Coigny, is a thoroughly aware and perceptive opponent to Mr. Pons's Gérard for as long as she's allowed to stick around. Larissa Diadkova, a guest from the Kirov, delivers fully and accurately a great weight of feeling as Madelon, the woman who, in the third act, staunchly hands over her young grandson to the Army of France. She becomes as much a challenge to the general musical-dramatic thinness as Mr.

Pons was in the first act, as if she had erupted into the scene out of some Greek tragedy.

The thinness elsewhere—the sense that the supposed action is only a scrim over archetypal Italian opera—is by no means due to any lack in the orchestra. Giordano's score is particular in style and intent—and often beautiful, as Mr. Levine lovingly reveals. Perhaps he loves the first act too much. The spiky runs of little notes, which Giordano presumably meant to point up the fussiness of the Coigny soirée, are encouraged to become fences in front of the voices, and the brittle rhythm is stiff, sometimes against the best interests of the singers. However, Mr. Levine is a wonderfully sympathetic accompanist to Mr. Pavarotti, and the score is honored by a performance so assiduous. Mr. Levine's occasional heartstring-pulling portamentos and his feeling for the deep veins of nostalgia in pastiche make one remember that the opera is contemporary with the Third Symphony of Mahler.

Giordano's music is, of course, psychologically simpler, and the design of the first act—where a huge mirror seems to be slicing its way through a fleur-de-lis carpet, on which the pallid nobility gather and dance in costumes of gold—risks making too much of the self-conscious decadence, siding too heavily with Gérard's accusation. But at least a risk is being taken. The other sets, more subdued, have the look of engravings, with Revolutionary slogans cut across the architecture, but nothing that could be interpreted as a dramatic statement in the theatre (with the exception, in the last act, of a pile of debris—and that just looks strange). The production recedes. It accepts that realism here means providing the right furniture.

As for the scenery, what's most important is the décor we hear, provided by the orchestra and also by the chorus, whose members make a brave show as citizen representatives in the third act. In the first, the divertissement of the Shepherdesses—marvellously sung, and graced with zephyr sounds from the orchestra—is far more sensuous than anything in the music between Chénier and Maddalena. Perhaps we should conclude that the Tenor and the Soprano are unlikely to love each other quite that much. ♦



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SHOUTS & MURMURS

YES, IN MY OWN BACK YARD

BY STEVE MARTIN

EARLIER this year, a Michelangelo was discovered on Fifth Avenue in New York City. Last week, in Los Angeles, I realized that the birdbath in my garden is by Raphael. I had passed it a thousand times; so had many producers, actors, executives, and the occasional tagalong screenwriter. No one had ever mentioned the attribution "Raphael." No one had bothered to attribute it at all, which surprises me, since I've noticed that most of my guests spend a lot of time discussing this birdbath. I try to steer the conversation around to my films, my television appearances, and my early work, but when I raise these subjects I often hear "What a charming birdbath!" To me this is further evidence of its being a Raphael: one just can't look away.

Much has been made of the fact that Raphael was not a sculptor, but it is little known that he designed many utilitarian objects that we now take for granted, including the portico, the candygram, and Olestra. A birdbath is completely within the oeuvre of the Master. Mine is stylistically characteristic of his work, including triangulation (inverted), psychologically loaded negative space, and a carved Madonna holding an infant who looks about fifty. Identical birdbaths appear in thirteen of his paintings; there is a Vasari portrait of Raphael painting a birdbath; and there is a scribble in his last diary which in translation reads, "Send my birdbath to Glendale," which is where I bought it at a swap meet.

In every person—even stupid ones—there lies an art expert, and I'm sure the one in you wants some proof of authenticity, especially in this age, when every day a Rembrandt van Rijn is being demoted to a Rembrandt Yeah Right.

There are two ways of confirming a work of art: Scholarship and Intuition. Scholarship proves some things, but it can never take you the last mile. It is Intuition that confirms attribution every time. How many times had I sat in my garden with the cordless, sipping on a cocktail ice of Prozac and Halcion and ignoring the masterpiece that stood before me? There comes a moment for us all, however, when our censor slips away, when the city slips away, when the volume of our head noise is turned down low and we realize we are sitting in front of Raphael's birdbath. It was then that I decided there was only one way to confirm my intuition to the rest of the world. I was to visit the tomb of Raphael at the Pantheon in Rome.

I stood before the vault where Raphael has lain for over four hundred and fifty years. Before I relate what happened next, I have to tell you a little bit about the Pantheon. It has one of the largest domed ceilings in the world. A domed ceiling might be a big deal in the world of architecture, but in the world of whispering it's lousy. Everything comes back to you three times as loud, and even your diction is cleaned up. So when I whispered "Did you make my birdbath?" everybody in the place heard me except for Raphael, who was dead. I

whispered again, louder, "Did you make my birdbath?" A few minutes later, a man came up to me, whispered "Yes, and the Wide Man wants a green lawn," handed me an envelope containing five hundred million lire, and slithered away. The voice of Raphael did not come to me until several hours later, as I sat in sight of the Pantheon sipping a synthetic lowfat coffee mixed with a legal (in Italy) derivative of Xanax and melatonin. The voice emanated from the Pantheon and walked over to where I was sitting. It confirmed that the birdbath was his and that he enjoyed my work in "The Jerk," but nothing since.

The Martin Birdbath, as some scholars are now calling it (I objected at first) is still in the garden and is attended by a twenty-four-hour armed guard, whom I have grown to like. I don't think Charlie knows what he is guarding, but it doesn't matter as long as he keeps the birds away. This is tricky, because to a bird a birdbath is a birdbath, be it by Raphael or by J. C. Penney. Sometimes my nights are punctuated by gunfire. I love animals and hate to kill them, but if a pigeon landed on the Mona Lisa—well, goodbye pigeon.

I'm not going to sell the Raphael. I'm not even going to mention it to my guests unless I feel it will get me somewhere. I suppose if I see someone staring at it as though a boom had just lowered on him I'll take him aside and fill him in. I will tell him he is standing in the presence of a master, that he is in touch with the power of the ages, and that he deserves the overused but still meaningful hyphenation "sensitive-type." Then I will direct him to sit back in my Gauguin-designed lawn chair and enjoy the view. How do I know it's a Gauguin? It is—I just know it is. ♦



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